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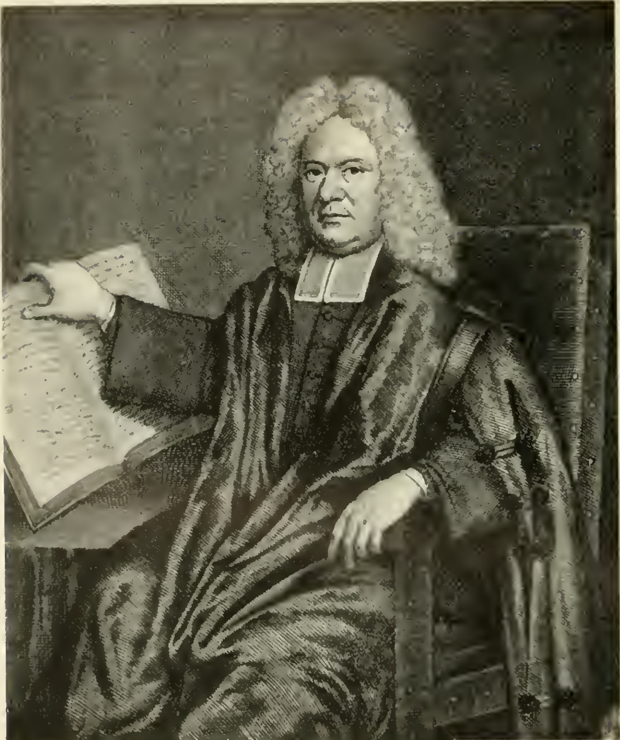

WILLIAM CARSTARES

THE MODERATORS OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

FROM 1690 TO 1740

BY THE

REV. JOHN WARRICK, M.A.

UNITED FREE CHURCH, OLD CUMNOCK

AUTHOR OF "THE HISTORY OF OLD CUMNOCK"

WITH SIX PORTRAITS

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PREFACE

THE character and scope of the pages which follow are sufficiently set forth in the Introduction.

The material for each biography has been gathered from many sources. These are indicated in the text. With the single exception of Carstares, of whose biography by Principal Story I have made free use, none of the Moderators dealt with has formed till now the subject of special study. A few meagre notes about Meldrum, Blair, and William Hamilton are to be found in the pages of *The Christian Instructor.* Scott's *Fasti* gives helpful references, but in great measure in every case the information secured has been hunted for in likely and unlikely quarters. Hundreds of books, including the various Club Publications, have been examined in the hope of gaining facts of moment, however small, in order to increase the vividness of the portraits drawn. Doubtless there are other details of interest still lying undiscovered in printed pamphlet and unprinted manuscript, but the result which I now offer as a contribution to the study of Scottish Church History, is as rich a harvest as I could reap from the fields which were open to me to traverse, and which had practically been untraversed before.

To many friends, too numerous to mention by name, I convey my thanks for the help they have given me. The keepers of all our great libraries to which I have sought admission, have readily granted me facilities for examining rare authorities under their care. Specially do I express my obligation to the Rev. James Kennedy, D.D., of the New College Library, Edinburgh, for much varied assistance, and also, and most of all, to my friend and neighbour, the Rev. Professor James Spence of Auchinleck, who has

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unweariedly allowed me to draw from the vast store of his historic knowledge, and has given my manuscript the benefit of his careful revision.

For the portrait of Carstares, I am indebted to the kindness of the Senate of the University of Edinburgh. The authorities of the Church of Scotland permitted me to reproduce their portraits of Law, Wisheart, and William Hamilton. To Francis J. Grant, Esq., W.S. and Rothesay Herald, I record my thanks for putting at my disposal the likeness of David Williamson, and to the Rev. W. S. Crockett of Tweedsmuir for that of John Gowdie.

It only remains for me to add that for the sake of completeness, the same incident is occasionally mentioned in more than one biography.

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THE MODERATORS OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

INTRODUCTION

SOME FEATURES OF THE REVOLUTION CHURCH

The pages which follow give an account of the twenty-seven ministers of the Church of Scotland, who, between 1690 and 1740, occupied the Chair of the General Assembly. Some of them were placed in the seat of honour more than once. Hardly any reason need be given why this period of ecclesiastical history should be chosen for special treatment. It is enough to say that it is able to tell one of the most interesting stories of our national life, and possibly it has not received the same attention as the Covenanting period which preceded it, or the Moderate period which came after it. The well-marked limits which define the epoch under consideration make it likewise manageable to deal with. To treat fully of all the Moderators of the Church of Scotland, from the Reformation down to 1843, would be a labour of vast magnitude. Nearly 170 biographies would require to be written. Such a task would be too formidable for anyone, who could not devote to it all his time. A choice had to be made, and it fell within the limits that have been mentioned.

The Covenanting era, throbbing with the life blood of its heroes, had come to an end by 1690. Episcopacy, weighed in the balances, had been found wanting by the majority of the Scottish people. Presbyterianism had regained its place and power, in response to the widespread desire of nobles and commons. The work of planting it anew and making it once more a fruitful tree in the national soil, was the task to which the Church braced itself, and many of those who sat in the Chair of the Assembly took a conspicuous part in the work, and helped largely to achieve its success.

In 1690, accordingly, a new epoch in the religious life of the nation commenced.

The limit found at the other end of the period covered by this study is also clearly defined. The year 1740 marks the final act in the expulsion of the Erskines and their supporters from the Church of their fathers. Alongside of the great river of religious knowledge and experience which continued to run within its old historic banks, there flowed now, at first indeed only a little rill, but yet a rill which gradually increased in volume, until though broken from time to time into numerous petty streams, it brought life and joy to many a Scottish heart, and made great desert places in the land blossom like the rose. The complete inauguration of that new movement in which the Seceders were definitely thrown out of the National Church, forms the close of the period with which this book has to do. Exactly fifty years, therefore, are embraced within the limits of the chosen section; but opportunity presents itself, at the same time, of referring to events which occurred before 1690 and after 1740. The reason of this is simple. The working life of some of the Moderators began long before the re-establishment of the Presbyterian faith. The first Moderator of all, for instance, had almost reached the end of his long ministry by the time he was placed in the Chair of the Assembly. A fair number of them, too, engaged in the business of the Church for a good many years after 1740. In fact, the biographies of these twenty-seven men must be filled up with references to many great events in which they had their part to play, and which are spread over more than a hundred years of our nation's chequered life. But this need not be regretted if it be true that history is learned best through biography.

Different opinions exist with regard to the spirit and power of the Revolution Church. There are those who think it was possessed of great excellences, and charged with a force which enabled it to live on a high level of faith and goodness, so that it fulfilled a notable and helpful ministry among the Scottish people. There are others who have come to the conclusion that the Church of Carstares and his fellow-workers was cold and weak, that it had no lofty ideals, and that even if it had the vision to see them, it had not the driving power to realize them. As a type of the first class, let Dr Chalmers be taken. In his *Correspondence* with Lord Aberdeen, he thus formulates his opinion of the

Church during this epoch:—"It should never be forgotten that the Church was never more efficient as a Christian and moral institute than from 1690 to 1712, and that in opposition to the lying preamble of Queen Anne's Act for the restoration of patronage, there had only occurred fourteen disputed cases" (p. 42). It is hardly possible to have a loftier estimate of the Revolution Church than this expressed by Dr Chalmers. I take as the type of the second class of critics Professor A. R. MacEwen, who, in his monograph on Antoinette Bourignon, maintains that—"In Scotland after the Revolution Settlement, religion was singularly dry, harsh, and pedantic. . . . There probably never was a time when Presbyterianism showed less of its strength and more of its weakness" (p. 209). It is hardly possible to express a poorer opinion of the Revolution Church than this given by Dr MacEwen. The two estimates are absolutely contradictory. Which of them is correct? Can it be determined with a fair degree of certainty whether the religious life of Scotland for a generation after the Revolution was rich and fruitful or poor and barren? Only the facts of the case can furnish the answer.

It is not permitted in such a matter to reason from *a priori* grounds. Yet it ought not to be forgotten that history and experience teach us that great movements, which have influenced strongly the life of a nation, do not come to a sudden and abrupt termination. If they die, they die gradually. They do not lose their force and cease to act in a moment. A fresh generation, ignorant of the convictions which bound their fathers in loyalty to what they deemed to be truth and righteousness, needs to grow up and displace the old. But generations take time to appear, and still more time to form their own views of what their predecessors regarded as certain and undeniable. Generations also overlap each other, and it is not easy to tell when the old generation disappears, and the new one begins to assert itself. Now the spiritual life of a large section of the Scottish people—that section which was recognized as the Established Church after the Revolution—was strong and pronounced during the years that preceded the Revolution. It was men in the ministry of the Church, and men in the membership of the Church—old men many of them, but with them also many young and faithful recruits, who had braved the hardships of the dark days of persecution, who

had stood up for the Covenant and suffered for it, when sympathy with the Covenant was rewarded with the hangman's rope in the Grassmarket or Claverhouse's bullet on the mosses and moors of Scotland—it was these men, with a record behind them and an experience within them, who passed into the Church of the Revolution. And it is simply impossible to believe that they, in the new and more favourable conditions in which they found themselves, broke completely and suddenly with their past, and that the Church which they composed, separated itself from the fervour and love and faith of Covenanting days, and became indifferent and cold as soon as the Revolution dawned. That is not the kind of thing that history tells us takes place. In support of this view, Gabriel Semple's verdict may be adduced. "I was witness," he says, "to the old times before the Restoration and to the times under persecution, and I never saw so much of the Spirit poured out as I have seen since the Revolution" (Blaikie's *Preachers of Scotland*, p. 188).

But what are the actual facts on which we may rest our verdict? The evidence runs in two directions. There is first the evidence to be drawn from the sermons of the time which have come down to us, and there is next the evidence which we possess given by contemporary witnesses, who were in sympathy with evangelical religion, and who have reported what they saw and heard.

I limit myself to the sermons which were published by the Moderators with whom I deal. They are not indeed many in number, but they suffice for the purpose. I have read all the sermons upon which I could lay my hands. Only a few have I been unable to trace. In addition, I have examined the lengthy series of sermons in MS. which were written and delivered by George Meldrum. From all of them I have given quotations in the pages which follow. It is true that the sermons are cast in an unfamiliar mould. They are not in modern form, but that has nothing to do with the teaching they contain, and it is to be remembered that the sermons, though fully written out, were preached without manuscript.

With one thing in them I have been struck. It was the gospel of our Lord which these men gave to their hearers. The teaching they set before them was not cold and lifeless. It was the good news of salvation through Christ. They

did not fail to commend Christ to their congregations, with an earnestness and devotion which revealed the love of their own hearts. They called upon their hearers imperatively to repent and believe the good news from heaven, and with no uncertain sound they set forth the doom of the impenitent. Associated with these things, there was a plain and unmistakable insistence upon holiness of character and life, which shows that these men knew and declared that the end of the gospel is goodness and purity. And all through, they laid most impressive emphasis on the personal responsibility of the individual, to transact for himself with God the great business of the soul. Take, for example, George Meldrum's ideal of a Christian minister, as portrayed in the sermon he preached before the Assembly in 1704. His text is 1 Peter v. 1-4. In his exhortation he refers to the oversight which ministers are expected to take of their congregations. He speaks in this way :—" This oversight implieth an accurate, diligent inspection of, and inquiring into and observing the case of the souls committed to the pastor's charge; this is ἐπισκοπεῖν, this is to play the Scripture Bishop or Overseer, as set on a watch-tower, to look round about to the flock and each soul therein, to discover their spiritual condition. And the state of souls in a congregation is very various, some converted, some unconverted, some ignorant, some knowing, some fallen or ready to fall into an error or vice, some weak, some strong, some secure and self-confident, some under soul-trouble, some walking in the joy of the Lord, some thriving, some declining—this should be noticed and observed, and their various condition and relation and their behaviour therein, and what fruit the word of God hath ; unto all which it were needful to know each one in the flock, as much as is possible, for to divide to each their portion." The man who could speak in that fashion could never be cold and lifeless.

Or take David Williamson's presentation of the gracious method pursued by God in leading sinners into His kingdom. " We should know the way," he says, " how the Lord brings in poor sinners to Christ. First : He kills and then makes alive, wounds and then heals. He convinces of the lost, undone, self-destroyed case by nature and course ; a law-work in some degree passes on the soul. The law is a schoolmaster to lead to Christ. Thus the sinner is made to inquire

after a deliverer. 'Who shall deliver me,' says Paul. Second: A new light is broken up that discovers sin in its black colours, smelling rank of hell, and a beauty in holiness, and discovers the necessity, excellency, willingness, and ability of Christ to save to the uttermost all that come to God in Him. He is seen to be the chief of ten thousand and altogether lovely. Thus sinners are called from darkness to His marvellous light. Third: Then the heart is prepared by the arm of Jehovah to receive the impressions of mercy in a thorough renovation, the stony heart is removed, a pliable melting frame is given. Fourth: The soul is brought over to give consent to the bargain and to take Christ on gospel terms and say—'My beloved is mine and I am His.' In all which the exceeding greatness of His power kyths, working in them that believe." No statement could be clearer. It may all, indeed, be done in a cumbrous way, crowded with minute details, yet the thing is done and Christ is proclaimed.

To this kind of preaching the people flocked, not only at the Sabbath services, but on the appointed week-day as well. It appealed to them, and struck a sympathetic note in their hearts. Preacher and hearer were at one in this respect. When such sermons were preached, there was life in the pulpit; and there was life in the pew when such sermons crowded churches. It was a case of "like people, like priest." The people loved to hear the truths which their leaders loved to declare.

There is the other line of evidence—the report that has come down to us from trustworthy and capable witnesses of the general character of the sermons preached by the ministers of the Revolution Church. Wodrow is one of these witnesses. He was regular in his attendance at the Assembly, from which he was in the habit of sending to his wife the names of the ministers who preached during the meeting of the Supreme Court of the Church. Usually he gives a brief account of the character and scope of the sermon preached. In every case in which he records his estimate of the discourses delivered by those Moderators to whom he refers, I have given it. These may be regarded as sufficient for the purpose in view. They are almost without exception highly appreciative. But Wodrow, too, as a rule, was able to be present as a worshipper on Sabbath, when the appointed ministers preached before the Assembly and the Lord High

Commissioner. His letters do not begin till 1709, and he often makes no detailed reference to these sermons; but let us take a few samples of his criticism from his earlier correspondence. In 1710 he says :—" In the afternoon we had an excellent sermon from Mr Samuel Johnston at Dundee, Neh. iv. 10, 'The burden-bearers are decayed.' I was extremely taken with it" (*Corr.* i. 150). On the 12th May 1712, he writes :—" Yesterday, in the afternoon, Mr James Thomson of Elgin preached an excellent, pointed sermon upon Jehoshaphat's words—'Only deal courageously, and the Lord shall be with thee for good.' He pressed a courageous standing by the Reformation rights of the Church of Scotland" (i. 292). In May, 1714, he tells how "Mr Gray in the afternoon had a very good sermon upon Dan. ix. 17, and a very honest and free prayer after it" (i. 554). Four years later, he states that "Mr Wilkie of Uphall preached in the afternoon upon 1 John iv. 8, and handled our *loving one another, because God is love*, very sweetly" (ii. 377). These quotations must suffice. Wodrow was evangelical in his doctrine and sympathies, and he never hesitated to express disappointment when he felt it.

Willison of Dundee may likewise be cited as a witness in this matter. It is needless to say that he was at once a pronounced Evangelical and a prominent Churchman. In his *Fair and Impartial Testimony against the Defections of the Established Church*, he makes reference to the failure of the church and nation to learn the lessons of the Rebellion of 1715 and its suppression. "Alas," he says, "we became unthankful to God, and soon forgot his goodness; we turned secure and confident under King George's protection and favour, and began to lose that zeal for preserving the purity of doctrine and worship, for suppressing error and immorality, and for the advancement of religion and godliness which former Assemblies manifested. Now our old zealous, suffering ministers were generally gone off the stage, and a woful lukewarmness and indifferency began to seize upon the following generation." Willison, indeed, attributes the decline of true religion in Scotland partly to the Union with England in 1707, but he is quite clear on the point that the years after the Revolution were full of a life and vigour which passed away in the early decades of the eighteenth century.

In further support of Dr Chalmers' estimate of the religious

life of the time, it is interesting to come across a statement carefully drawn up by a minister, who had peculiar opportunities of knowing the facts of the case. This was the Rev. John Williamson of Inveresk, son of the old minister of St Cuthberts, and a warm supporter of the Marrow doctrine. He did not see his way to associate with the Erskines in their separation from the Church. He disapproved so much of the final procedure taken by the two brothers and their companions, that he wrote a pamphlet against them entitled *Plain Dealing, or an Essay for the conviction of the Seceding Brethren.* In it the author says :—" It is yet consistent with the memory of many that at the Revolution there was a remarkable desire of the word and close attendance on ordinances by persons of all ranks ; and the labours of ministers were eminently blessed with success. There was a savour of religion among the professors of it, and many have dated their conversion and own their further confirmation from these times, under the means dispensed by the ministers of this Church " (p. 46). This was written in 1739. Such a statement derives its force from the fact that it was deliberately made and put forth in a controversial document framed by an Evangelical minister, to convince the Seceders that they were wrong in the view they took of the spiritual life of the Church.

In this connection, there may also be cited the testimony of an outsider who was not biased in favour of Scotland or of Presbyterianism, but who has nothing but praise for the religious leaders of the day and for the people. I refer to Daniel Defoe. Even though he may have wished to put his knife into the Church of England, we can make full allowance for his purpose in that direction, and yet see clearly how great and real was his admiration for the Scottish Church. At the same time, he was a most competent observer, and had unusual opportunities of making himself acquainted with the facts of the case. In his *Memoirs of the Church of Scotland*, we find him saying :—" As there is among the ministers a spirit of zeal and an earnest devoting of all their powers, faculties, strength, and time to their work, so the people's part is in proportion equal ; their taste of hearing, their affection to their ministers, their subjection to be instructed, and even to discipline ; their eagerness to follow the directions given ; those are things so visible in Scotland, that they are not to be described but admired.

To see a congregation sit with looks so eager, as if they were to eat the words as they came out of the mouths of the preachers; to see the affection with which they hear, that there shall be a general sound of mourning through the whole Church upon the extraordinary warmth of expression in the Minister, and this not affected and designed, but casual and undissembled" (p. 332).

Defoe's eulogium is most interesting, but perhaps the fullest and most satisfactory glimpse we get of the inner history of the Revolution Church, is afforded by the remarkable *Memoirs and Spiritual Exercises* of Elizabeth West, from which many quotations are made in the pages which follow. Elizabeth West was in humble circumstances in life. She was in domestic service in Edinburgh, but seems always to have had freedom not only to attend the house of God Sabbath after Sabbath, but to go to communions held in various parts of the Lothians and Fife. In fact, she haunted these gatherings. Her favourite minister in Edinburgh was George Meldrum of the Tron Kirk. At a later period she was resident in Trinity College parish, and frequented the ministry of John Moncrieff. Her *Memoirs*, which show she knew Christian truth and could give a reason for the hope that was in her, cover the years from 1694 to 1709. In recording her experiences she makes mention of more than thirty ministers, some of whom she alludes to frequently; and it is a very striking fact that with hardly an exception she speaks in the warmest terms of them all as messengers of God, from whom she derived great spiritual benefit. She did not find their sermons "dry, harsh, and pedantic." They brought her the very bread of life on which her soul could feed, and with deep gratitude she expresses over and over again her indebtedness to them. There are several other books belonging to this period of a similar character, like the *Memoirs* of Walter Pringle of Greenknow, and the *Experiences* of James Waddel of Holhouseburn, but Elizabeth West's story of her spiritual life is unique in the fulness with which she gives the marrow of the sermons she heard, and in the number of ministers in the town and country whom she passes in review.

Her comments are all the more valuable when we realize that she could not have had the faintest idea that they would be put in print. One comes away from the perusal of her book with the assurance that her record is true, and that

the sermons she heard from well-known ministers and from others with whose spirit and teaching we are not otherwise acquainted, prove that the ordinary pulpit work of the time was calculated to lead men to Christ and to feed the flock of God.

It is possible that additional testimony may yet be borne in the same direction, by the discovery of other diaries kept by persons whose education was higher and whose intellectual abilities were greater than those of Elizabeth West. Three may be mentioned in the hope that they will yet be found lying forgotten in some family chest. One is the diary of Mrs Balderston, the sister of the Erskines, which is sometimes quoted in literature bearing upon this period. Agnew, in preparing his *Theology of Consolation*, seems to have had access to it. The other two are the notebooks kept by Ebenezer and Ralph Erskine when they were students, in which they put down their opinion of the sermons to which they listened. The discovery of these MSS. could not fail to be of intense interest, and would throw a clear light on the question I am discussing. The Erskine notebooks were in the hands of the Rev. Donald Fraser, the first biographer of the famous brothers, but where they have gone no one seems to know. Meantime, the evidence which is available on the point does not allow one to hesitate for a moment in agreeing with the verdict of Dr Chalmers that, up to the period at which he wrote, the Church in Scotland "was never more efficient as a Christian and moral institute than from 1690 to 1712."

To this verdict may be added the opinion of Principal William Cunningham, whose vast historical knowledge and sobriety of judgment make his testimony even more weighty than that of Dr Chalmers. "For about twenty years after the Revolution," he says, "the Church of Scotland was, upon the whole, in a most efficient condition, and conferred most important benefits upon the country" (*Church Prin.*, p. 455).

Another feature falls to be noticed in connection with the Church of the Revolution. The output of literary work was remarkably small. This is true of the whole epoch from 1690 to 1740, but it is especially true of the first twenty-five years after Presbytery was re-established. The ministers generally did not devote themselves in any great measure to the preparation of material to be issued through the press. The

Moderators of the time are no exception. A few sermons were published by them and a few pamphlets on controversial subjects, but the only considerable contribution to Theology was the *Theologia* of Principal Wisheart, which was valued for a time, but is now hardly ever taken down from the library shelf. And yet, some at least of these twenty-seven men were capable scholars, qualified to write on theological and philosophical topics, in a way that would have been helpful in their own day. How are we to account for the fact that no important work came, for instance, from the pen of William Carstares or Professor Hamilton, both of whom are reputed to have been of marked ability in point of scholarship ? And others might be mentioned whose gifts were of no mean order, but who failed to sit at their desks and write what we should have read with interest to-day.

The explanation of this literary barrenness is very simple. The time and attention of these men were so fully taken up with other matters, that they found it impossible to devote themselves to study and to literary work. The extent of Carstares' correspondence alone, on matters of Church and State—all of which called for inquiry and careful consideration—makes us almost wonder how he was able to overtake it, while attending at the same time, after 1702, to his daily ministerial duties in Edinburgh. The truth is, that after the formal re-establishment of Presbyterianism in the land, there were so many pressing details to be looked after, so much to do in the way of re-organizing the worship and discipline of the Church, so many difficulties to be settled in parishes near and far away, that the leaders of the Church had their hands fully occupied, while they were responsible as well for the management of a large congregation or the conduct of a class of Divinity students.

And after the work of re-organizing was fairly accomplished, and local problems had received their solution, there were other matters which claimed the earnest thought of those who, by common consent, filled the chief places in the councils of the Church. The encroachments of Episcopacy, the domineering spirit of the State shown in the passing of the Oath of Abjuration and the re-imposition of Patronage, followed by and by, first, by the weary case of Simson, and then by the conflict which ended in the Secession—all these things prevented men, whose inclination and habit might have led them to study, from giving their time and strength

to the production of some really great book, which would have made both them and their age illustrious.

The charge of failure to do something that might live in the world of letters was brought, even at the time, against the ministers of the Scottish Church by English critics. And the Englishman, whose testimony has already been cited, entered the lists to drive back the charge. "Whoever considers," says Defoe, "the office of a minister in Scotland, how faithfully the ministers there execute it, how constantly they preach, how painfully they study, how diligently they examine, how duly they visit, will easily account for that weak scandal that our people in England raise upon them, viz., *That we see none of their writings.* And I shall add to it what a worthy and reverend divine of the Church of England said on the occasion of that reflection: "That if our ministers, as well of the Church as the Dissenters, would study more, preach more, visit, comfort, examine, and instruct their people more, though they wrote less, it would be better service to the Church, and they would deserve more the name of Gospel Ministers." After calling attention to "many other laborious things, which the ministers of the Church of Scotland go through," Defoe adds that, "All this is supported and discharged with such courage, such temper, such steadiness in application, such unwearied diligence, such zeal and vigour in the work, that our *English Sermon-Readers* know little of, not having the same support, and I fear not the same spirit to carry them through. In a word, as they have a work which human strength is hardly sufficient to discharge, so they have a support which human nature is not capable to supply. And I must acknowledge that there seems to be such an appearance of the Spirit and Presence of God with and in this Church, as is not at this time to be seen in any Church in the world" (*Memoirs*, p. 331).

This testimony, borne by the acute and versatile English writer, to the character and ability of the ministers of the Scottish Church is all the more valuable because it was not written at the beginning of the period under review, but as late as 1717. Accordingly, the clamant calls of their appointed work and the special needs of the time when the Church had to be largely reconstituted, supply us with the real explanation of the failure of the ministers to turn their attention to the fields of literature.

If one might venture on a parallel case, it may be found

in the career of the distinguished Scottish Churchman, who alone in modern days was deemed worthy of being raised on three occasions to the Moderator's Chair of his Church. The biographer of Principal Rainy tells us that the whole bent of his mind turned towards the study of the great doctrines of our faith and their history, and that to that work he intended rigidly to devote himself. But the force of circumstances and the call of his Church led him against his own inclination into the arena of theological controversy and ecclesiastical politics, and made him carry at the same time the exacting burden of daily Church business. Accordingly, he was prevented from enriching Scotland and the world with contributions to the realm of Theology which he was eminently fitted to give. Principal Rainy's biography, says Dr Carnegie Simpson, is "that of a man who wanted to be a scholar, and who, comparatively early, gained a scholar's seat, but who, by a strange irony, from almost the day he attained it, was constrained to give scholarship a secondary place, and be primarily a leader of ecclesiastical policy. His ambition was to study and teach or write Church history; his task, to make it" (i. 146).

In exactly the same fashion, the men qualified in the days after the Revolution to produce what would have lived at least for a time were so engrossed with the management of the Church's work, that their purpose, supposing they entertained it, of sending forth to the world proofs of their learning and their literary skill was never achieved.

Is it then, after all, worth while to find out and record in detail the sayings and doings of these men, who lived and wrought and debated two hundred years ago? Each reader of this book must be allowed to give his own answer to that question. It may be true that to many people even the names of these Moderators are unfamiliar, with the exception of Carstares. "The Kennedies, Simsons, and Crichtons who were raised to the Moderator's Chair, are names unknown," remarks Principal John Cunningham (*Church Hist.*, ii. 194). But can the history of the Scottish Church be really understood without some acquaintance with them? If Mr Hill Burton, for instance, had known a little more about Hew Kennedie, he would have avoided the mistake of saying that the first Moderator after the Revolution was Gabriel Cunningham—an error which is perpetuated in *The Church of Scotland*, edited by Principal Story (iii. 572).

The period under review must be regarded as one of the most important in the whole range of our nation's life. And if these pages help to make the picture of our historic Church during the years that followed the re-establishment of Presbyterian rule, with the problems it had to solve and the difficulties it had to face, a little more vivid than it was before, the labour involved in gathering materials to paint it will not have been in vain.

CHAPTER I

HEW KENNEDIE, MODERATOR, 1690

HEW KENNEDIE, beloved by his friends, belittled by his foes, had the unique honour conferred upon him of being the Moderator of the first General Assembly after the Revolution. When so many were to be found who had played their part nobly during the dark days of suffering, and who had trodden with unflinching courage the path of duty, there must have been something peculiarly deserving of recognition in one who, by the votes of the majority, was called upon to preside over the deliberations of that memorable gathering. The summons to occupy its chief seat was a crown of glory set on the head of a veteran, whom his brethren deemed worthy of all the respect they could pay to him.

Practically no information has come down to us of the early days of Kennedie. As his name appears in later years as a heritor in Bathgate, where he seems to have lived after his eviction in 1660, it is probable that he was born in that parish. The date of his birth is sometime about the year 1621. Of his relations we only know his brother Robert, who, like Hew, entered the ministry. Robert is mentioned by the author of *Presbyterian Eloquence Displayed* as taking part in Clydesdale at a conventicle. Wodrow records of him that he was apprehended by order of the Privy Council in 1682, for being present at Bothwell Bridge, but about his trial no information is given. Robert seems, likewise, to have crossed the path of Peden from time to time and been associated with him in his wanderings.

One special advantage Hew Kennedie enjoyed in his youth. He was brought up partly under the care of Samuel Rutherford. The link of connection between him and the Saint of the Covenant cannot now be ascertained, but the influence of Rutherford could not fail to impress itself upon his young friend, of whom he thought so well that in due time he recommended him to the parish of Midcalder. Kennedie studied Arts at the Glasgow University, where

he took the degree of Master in 1641. After completing his theological course at St Andrews, he was ordained at Midcalder on the 13th April 1643. His trials before the Presbytery were completed in three weeks, a much shorter time than was usual in those olden days. The reason of the haste is made known to us. The church had been vacant for sixteen months. In Midcalder, Kennedie remained for seventeen years, till he was driven from his charge. Three years after his settlement, the parish, which was of large extent and had been known by the name of Calder Comitis, was divided, Kennedie continuing in that portion called Midcalder, while the remaining section took the name of West Calder. By this division, both the work and the stipend of the minister suffered diminution.

An interesting ceremony took place in connection with Kennedie's ordination. It was observed in other parishes as well, but it is difficult to say how far the practice was general. We find it carried out in Bolton, in Haddingtonshire, in 1640, and in the Presbytery of Perth in 1700. At the close of the inaugural service in Midcalder, the Moderator delivered to the new minister the pulpit Bible, the keys of the door of the church, and the bell strings. He also handed to him a small quantity of "sand and stean" (stone), in token that he had been put in possession of the manse and glebe. The presentation of the keys and bell strings signified that there was given to the new incumbent by the Presbytery full power over the use of the church, which could only be opened for service by his authority. The gift of the pulpit Bible was a solemn indication of the character of the work the minister had to perform in public. His one theme was to be the Evangel of the Lord Jesus. It is, perhaps, to be regretted that an old custom like this, so impressive and full of meaning, has completely died out of the ritual of the Scottish Church. The presentation of the Bible for use in the pulpit could not be more strikingly made than in connection with the act of ordination.

The period of Kennedie's settlement was big with important issues in Church and State. The Westminster Assembly was just about to sit. In the following year the army of Charles I. was defeated at Marston Moor. Montrose by brilliant strategy and personal bravery, was trying to win Scotland back to the side of the King. The Protector himself, some years later, was to appear in the land of the

Covenant, to quell all opposing factions in the State and give his support to the Protesters in the Church. Kennedie, a man of strong convictions by which he was ready at all hazards to abide, was forced to take his part in the exciting episodes of the day. With great earnestness he threw himself on the side of the opponents of Charles, and accordingly, he has received at the hands of one of the historians of the parish, the name of "the republican minister of Calder." The vigour of the minister in this crisis is reflected in the action which he and his session took. Thus we read in the minute of the 13th July, 1645:—"The session has and do ordain all men within the paroche above twelve yeirs of age, to be on Alderstone Muire on Wednesday nixt, ordaines twa elders in ilk quarter to give them adverteisment for y^t effect, on certificatioune y^t those y^t comes not, shall be those y^t shall go out to this present expeditioun." A year later it was declared "that if any women in the paroche had their husbands killed in the public service, they should be helped." Kennedie's thorough-going zeal on behalf of the Covenanting cause did not fail to mark him out among his brethren, who at the Commission of Assembly on the 18th February, 1647, called upon him to accompany Leslie's army as one of the chaplains to the artillery. For some reason he wished to be excused, but the Commission pressed the appointment and declined to rescind it. "This day," they say on the 23rd February, "petition of Mr Hew Kennedie for exeeming himself from going forth to attend the army, refused, and he personally present appointed to addresse himself to that employment with diligence." We can, therefore, imagine the minister of Midcalder, even though he is described as "little of stature," accompanying the Scottish forces during Leslie's campaign in the north and west of the country. How long he continued on this national duty, or what provision was made for his work at home, we cannot tell. Doubtless he was relieved of attendance upon the troops from time to time, but his experiences now carried two results with them. He was brought into touch with men like Leslie, who were at the very heart of affairs in Scotland, and at the same time the record he was writing of devotion to the spirit and letter of the Covenant was to be remembered against him, when Charles II. came to deal with the opponents of his father. His services to the army brought him a certain measure of recognition, for on the

4th March, 1649, he preached by appointment before the Honourable Estates of Parliament. By this time he was married, but the name of his wife does not appear. His first child was born early in 1649.

Further religious work in connection with the army was put into Kennedie's hands. On the 19th February, 1650, he was ordered by the Commission " to repair to the garrison of Perth for discharging the ministeriall function there, and to be ready to goe against the first of March." One wonders whether the minister of Midcalder during his term of office in the Fair City, came into contact with the Second Charles, and witnessed in October that ridiculous attempt known as " The Start," in which the new king sought to escape from the control of the dominant party in the realm. We can hardly suppose that Kennedie was present at the coronation of Charles at Scone on the first day of the following year. The king's formal acceptance of the Covenant brought the Scottish army over to his side, but a mark was put against certain zealous Protesters who had opposed his claims. Kennedie was one of them, and in due time he suffered for the part he played. When his duties came to an end at Perth, he returned to Midcalder and resumed the spiritual charge of the parish.

A very curious rumour connected with this period of Kennedie's career, when he was so closely associated with the anti-royalist party, requires to be noticed. It was circulated by his detractors during his later years, and was repeated and believed long after his death. He was accused, especially by the Jacobites, of having consented in his capacity as one of the Scottish Commissioners to England, to the surrender of Charles I. to the English Parliament. It is not needful here to make any comment on the action of the Scottish representatives in relation to Charles in 1647. That matter is outside the scope of this biography. It is enough to say that now most historians recognize the perfectly honourable intention of the agreement entered into at Newcastle by the two nations. The money paid by England was in acknowledgment of the help given by the Scottish army, and had nothing to do with the surrender of the king, who was handed over to the charge of Parliament and not to his opponents. However, we are only concerned with Kennedie's part in the transaction, and with the calumny which was heaped upon him as a prime mover in

it, and as a beneficiary through the money which passed from the one nation to the other. *The Historical Relation of the Assembly of 1690* by Cockburn of Ormiston puts the charge in its baldest form, when it states not only that Kennedie was with the army, but also that he received 6000 merks as his share of the price.

That is the accusation, which in various guises in prose and verse, was hurled at the head of Kennedie during his closing years, and made to besmirch his memory after he was gone. What is the reply to it? Simply this: Kennedie had nothing to do with the transaction whatever. He was not with the army at Newcastle, and was not even a commissioner appointed for the purpose of negotiating with England on the question of Charles. Proof is abundant in support of this statement, though, on the face of it, one could hardly suppose that a young country minister, recently ordained, would have been entrusted with a share in the conduct of high matters of State. Here is what Principal Rule says in his *Examination* of Cockburn's allegation: "That he was with the army or received 6000 merks is most false. He was never in England till 1690, when he was sent with others to London to address the king."

How then did the calumny originate and hold its ground? The answer to that is likewise very simple. It was only during Kennedie's closing years and after his death that this malicious rumour was widely circulated. We all know how, after the lapse of forty years, stories are not easily cleared up or the truth discovered. But in this case the explanation is at hand. There was a Hew Kennedie, who was deemed worthy of being a Scottish Commissioner in 1647, but he was not the minister of Midcalder. He was Hew Kennedie, burgess and bailie of Ayr. How the two should have been mixed up together may be difficult to unravel, but Rule's assertion that Kennedie had never been in England till after the Revolution is decisive, while the records of the Scottish Parliament make mention only of Hew of Ayr. Even historical writers at the present day are not always aware of the difference between the two men, for such careful editors as those who have passed through the press for the Scottish History Society the minutes of the Assembly Commission of 1646-7, refer in the index to the minister and the burgess as if they were one individual. At any rate Hew

Kennedie of Midcalder, anti-royalist though he was, had no share in Scotland's act at Newcastle in 1647.

As became a zealous Protester, Kennedie took every possible means to prevent the leaven of disloyalty to the Covenant from affecting his parishioners. Doubtless he made it the frequent subject of discourse in church. He was not content, however, with pressing its claims in his sermons. Like almost every other parish in the Lowlands of Scotland in 1638, Midcalder had been eager to sign the copy of the Covenant sent by the Estates in Edinburgh. But ten years had passed since then. Kennedie could not rest without getting a fresh bond from every grown-up person in his parish. And so we read in the local records, under date 10th December 1648, that thirteen shillings and fourpence were expended for the printed Covenant and other "two printet paperis;" and seven days later: "The paroche of Calder being frequently convenit and being the Sabbath day, the Covenant was renewed by subscryving over again of the whole parocheneris." The heart of the honest man must have been filled with joy by the unanimous acceptance of the nation's vow by his people.

But the thoughts of Kennedie travelled far beyond the bounds of Midcalder. With James Guthrie, who suffered martyrdom in 1661, he was well acquainted. Their intimacy, perhaps, began in St Andrews, where Guthrie after his student days, taught philosophy. When Guthrie was translated from Lauder to Stirling, it seems to have been necessary for the Commission of Assembly to appoint certain ministers to assist at the induction. Thus we read in their Proceedings of 1st January 1650, that Hew Kennedie and other brethren were ordered to take part in the settlement of Guthrie in his new sphere. Kennedie was further associated with Guthrie in the production of the famous pamphlet —*The Causes of God's Wrath.* This was mainly the work of the minister of Stirling, but Kennedie took a certain part in it. Guthrie, however, in his appearances before the Council, gallantly abstained from implicating his friend. He acknowledged only his own share in the authorship. It is no mean honour for the minister of Midcalder to have his name linked to that of Guthrie, in the drawing up of that powerful indictment of the nation and its rulers, which so maddened his enemies that they could not rest till they shed the blood of Guthrie in the Grassmarket of Edinburgh.

Kennedie also had been one of a number of ministers who met together in 1651 for the purpose of making various "Confessions." These "Confessions" formed the basis of Guthrie's pamphlet, though it was not published for two years later. Doubtless it was the part he took in this conference which marked Kennedie out as qualified to help in the drawing up of *The Causes of God's Wrath.* We find him also appending his name with sixty-six other "ministers, elders and expectants," to a document presented to the General Assembly of 1652, in which a protest is made against the legality of the Assembly of 1651, held at St Andrews and adjourned to Dundee, and also against the Assembly then being held in Edinburgh, and which the signatories call "the present pretended Assembly." The document bears the title, "The Representation, Propositions and Protestation of divers ministers, elders and professors for themselves and [others] to the ministers and elders met at Edinburgh, July 21, 1651." The date is wrong on the title page; it should be 1652. The summation of the names attached to the Representation is likewise erroneous. It is given as ninety-seven; it should be sixty-seven.

The controversy which arose in the Church in connection with the Act of Classes passed by Parliament in 1649, became most acute after the battle of Dunbar, and threatened to shake to its foundations the cause of the Covenant. The Protesters, who wished to admit to office in Church and State only those who were whole-hearted in their support of the Covenant, were inferior in numbers to their opponents, but it is admitted that in point of ability and spiritual earnestness they excelled the Resolutioners. Men indeed, like Douglas, Leighton and Dickson were found supporting the less stringent policy, but the other side could claim Rutherford, Guthrie of Stirling and his cousin in Fenwick, Durham and Trail, Binning and Patrick Gillespie. The conflict waxed hot all over the country. In certain Presbyteries like Dumbarton, Stirling and Linlithgow, the two parties were not content with debating the point at issue, but formed themselves into rival camps, each allocating to itself full Presbyterial powers, ordaining their own sympathizers and evicting where possible the representatives of their opponents. The records of the Presbytery of Linlithgow throw a clear light upon the bitterness of feeling which

prevailed and the high-handed action which ensued. Efforts were indeed made to bring about a healing of the breach. Thus Brodie in his *Diary*, on the 28th May 1653, writes: "We met with Mr Douglas and Mr Hutchison (two of the ministers of Edinburgh), and found there was much heat and prejudice in his spirit [*sic*]. He had defended some of these young men in the Linlithgow Presbytery, because he thought they had good in them." And again:—"We had a meeting with the brethren of the Protestation and spent an afternoon in jangling without any fruit."

The following extracts from the Register of the Presbytery of Linlithgow (the Protesters' Presbytery), show what an unseemly pitch was reached in the feud between the two sections of the Church. The Protesters, claiming for themselves full authority to ordain, had met at Linlithgow for the purpose of setting apart Mr Alexander Guthrie to the work of the ministry. Their opponents invaded the meeting and stopped its proceedings. "The said Presbyterie," it is recorded on 31st May 1653, "being put by violence from the said place at Linlithgow, were forced to keep their meeting here at Magdalenis near to the east port of Linlithgow. . . . The brethren having staid all nycht there, and again coming in the morning before the Presbyterie was fully convenit, came furth the governor of Linlithgow with his souldierie in arms, and the Provost and Baillies, with their officers and halberts, with many other of the disaffected in the towne, and after that they called furth the ministers furth of the hous, and discharged them from going about that admission. The ministers answering that they fand themselfis bound in conscience to go about that work, immediately therafter the officers of the town, with their halberts and other soldiers of the town, fell upon the ministers, and woundit sum of them and dreave them by violence fra that place." The Protesters met on the following day "at the place called Langlandis, near Pardivane," Hew Kennedie being one of the number. "Efter long prayer by the Moderator, everie one being interrogat by him quhat was incumbent to be done . . . they resolved in the Lord's strengthe to goe on to the closing of the work." Further, "the Presbyterie appoynts Mr Gilbert Hall, Moderator, Hew Kennedie, and Robert Row to represent the ryott done this day at the Magdalenis to the judges in Edinburgh at ther dwelling houssis." Additional details of the case need not be given. The Synod declared the

settlement null and void, whereupon the Protestors appealed to "the first lawful General Assembly." The unseemly conflict between the Protestors and the Resolutioners was only brought to an end when the contending parties wisely dropped the quarrel, in order to present a united front to the advancing claims of Episcopacy.

While taking his full share of work during those bitter years of misunderstanding and separation, Kennedie likewise displayed a marvellous interest in that very general, but most melancholy pursuit of witches, which disfigures our national history at this period. There is no occasion here to enter into the causes which led to the arraignment and death of many persons, who were supposed to be in league with the devil. It was an age of superstition in our own country, in England, and on the Continent. Distinguished men, even in later times, believed in the reality and power of witches. Sir Matthew Hale, for instance, sat as a judge in witch trials. Sir Thomas Browne gave evidence in support of the evil power exercised by witches. Even Samuel Johnson held firmly to the existence of witchcraft, while John Wesley was tainted with the same opinion. Now, just as superstitious beliefs of this kind, taking hold of men's minds, cannot easily be explained, so it is simply a commonplace to say that after they are once rooted in a nation's life, it becomes extremely difficult to eradicate them. They pass without question from father to son. The plea of the Church for stringent measures to be taken to punish all who had entered into the service of the devil was based on the old word in Exodus—"Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live." Many districts in Scotland became notorious for the presence and influence of witches, as well as for their detection and condemnation. The counties of Renfrew and Lanark, Haddington and Linlithgow, gained an unenviable fame in this connection. The machinery everywhere set up for the probation of witches was accepted as reliable and appropriate. How the poor creatures could endure half an inch or more of sharp iron thrust into their flesh, without shrinking or even wincing, is something of a mystery. It has been suggested, however, that the instruments used ran up into a sheath, like a juggler's knife, and so really caused no suffering at all. Certain probers were well-known as successful in finding the devil's mark. John Kincaid of Tranent, one Cowan from the same district, and George Cathie from the neighbourhood

of Glasgow were among the most distinguished in the occult, but most cruel, art of pricking.

The ministers of the day must certainly bear their share of blame in introducing and maintaining those harsh and penal means of destroying the fancied power of Satan, and we need not be slow to mete it out to them in full measure. But in this, as in the whole of the discipline exercised in congregational life during many generations in Scotland, the ministers did not stand alone. The people were with them in their action. The elders, who constituted with the minister the court of judgment in every parish, sprang from the people and were chosen by them. If the mass of the population had been opposed to the treatment to which supposed traffickers with the powers of evil were subjected, the preachers of the gospel would never have been able to continue the system of inspection and punishment. Ministers, elders and church members alike must share the responsibility of creating and perpetuating such a condition of affairs.

To test witches and to burn them when convicted was by no means an inexpensive business. The Church paid one portion of the cost, and the town or parish the other. The bill for burning two witches in Kirkcaldy in 1633 was divided into " the Kirk's part," which was £17, 10s. Scots, and " the Town's part," which was £17, 1s. Midcalder's bill for church and parish during Kennedie's reign must have been fairly heavy.

It was at a very early date after his settlement that Kennedie and his session began the work of detecting and disposing of witches. The records within a year after he came to Midcalder tell of several witches who were tried and condemned to death. Nor did he in his zeal confine himself to the bounds of his own parish. He gave information regarding suspected characters to the authorities elsewhere. On the 31st December, 1644, we read in the minutes of the Privy Council, that " Mr James Douglas, minister of Carnwath, depones to the Council that he received a letter from Mr Hew Kennedie, Calder, testifying that Margaret Watsoune [who lived in Carnwath] was ane witch and keepit several meetings " with the devil. The hand of Kennedie is likewise seen in the following case which came before the Presbytery of Lanark. " August 1, 1644. The qlk day compears Cathrean Schaw, wha being suspected

of witchcraft and delated be some witches apprehended in Cadder, is ordained to be committed till schee be further tried."

It must not, however, be supposed that no appeals were entered against the summary findings of the ecclesiastical courts. In the records of the Privy Council there is engrossed, for example, "the complaint of Margaret Thomson, wife of Archibald Gray in Calder, against the Tutor of Calder and minister thereof," which may be given in full, as it not only concerns Kennedie but also shows that the right of appeal was sometimes exercised, though the difficulty and expense of carrying through such an appeal may have prevented many from having recourse to it. It brings out, too, in the clearest way possible, the terrible treatment to which suspected persons were put. There is no reason to doubt the truthfulness of Margaret Thomson's story. On the 20th August 1644, Margaret complains that for sixteen weeks she was forced to stand in one place in sackcloth, and for twenty-six days not allowed to sit down, being kept waking all the time. She wishes to "interrogate the minister whether or not he did straik the supplicant with his wand, and because the same was not of great force, he did straik her with a rung." On the 2nd October, she depones that "she was apprehended by the order of the Tutor of Calder and the minister there, and putt and keeped in the vestrie of the kirk of Calder, and cruellie tortured for the space of a quarter of a year." On the 21st November it is recorded that "about twenty days since she convened the Tutor of Calder and the minister thereof before the Lords of the Privy Council, for their cruell dealing against her in waking her the space of twenty days naiked, and having nothing on her but sackcloth." The Lords ordered the Tutor and Kennedie to compear before them and produce evidence against her of the sin of witchcraft. Since then, however, she avers "she has been laid in the stocks and keeped in great miserie, separate from all companie and worldly comfort, and can see no end to her miserie by (except) lawfull tryall." After hearing parties, the Lords ordain the pursuer to be set at liberty on finding caution to compear before the Justices on lawful citation under penalty of 5000 merks. So ends this painful case, which is only a type of what was taking place in practically every parish throughout Scotland. For we must not think Kennedie singular in his

mistaken efforts to rid his district of all who held commerce with the Prince of Darkness. Between 1640 and 1649 the Assembly passed five acts condemnatory of witchcraft and witches. England has even a worse tale to tell than Scotland. In the British colonies across the Atlantic prosecutions raged—Cotton Mather being a prime mover in them. Gradually the popular mania against witches exhausted itself. Perhaps the severity of the judgments pronounced worked its own cure and brought about a revulsion of feeling. By 1662, over the whole of Scotland witch trials became less frequent. To David Ross, the Sheriff of Caithness, belongs the notoriety of condemning at Dornoch, in 1722, the last witch who suffered the penalty of death. The widespread character of the movement is seen in the number of victims who perished in Scotland. It is estimated that upwards of four thousand persons were put to death. Church and State alike would gladly tear out such a record from their history.

The restoration of Charles II. in 1660 brought about a considerable change in the fortunes of Kennedie. His friend Guthrie was apprehended, only to perish on the scaffold in the following year. Kennedie could not expect to escape completely, though martyrdom was not to be his lot. His sympathy with the Covenant and his strong adhesion to the Protesting party made him obnoxious to the majority in the Presbytery of Linlithgow, while his official connection as chaplain to the forces opposed to Charles I. was enough to secure his removal from Midcalder. We find it recorded that he was deposed from the ministry on the 7th December 1660, partly "for guilt in those things which concern his Majesty in the defence of the kingdom," and also, as Cockburn tells us in his *Historical Relation*, "for being a firebrand among his brethren and for a book entituled *The Causes of God's Wrath upon Scotland*." Cockburn likewise states that the act of deposition was performed by the Provincial Synod. As malicious charges were made later against Kennedie on account of this deposition, it must be borne in mind that his removal was wholly owing to the difference of opinion on matters which divided the Church. Without doubt, if this act of censure had not been passed now, he would have been deprived in 1662, with so many others. As it happened, his deprivation in 1660 made him one of the earliest sufferers in the cause of the Covenant.

For twenty-seven years the ban of excommunication

rested on Kennedie, but of his experiences during this long period not much information can be gathered. Certain references seem to indicate that he found a home in the neighbourhood of Bathgate. Perhaps he resided at his ancestral possession, as Patrick Walker describes him as one of the heritors of Bathgate in 1679. Walker, who bore him no love, in his *Vindication* of Cameron's name, speaks slightingly of Kennedie on his elevation to the Chair of the Assembly. " Their new chosen Moderator," he says, " was Mr H. K., who was deposed for his zeal and faithfulness in his young days by the Publick Resolutioners, and after that preached none until the year 1679, that the third Indulgence was granted ; then he preached for four Sabbaths within the parish of Midcalder, where he was formerly minister, and assisted at an indulged sacrament in West Calder in October thereafter, when all that had been at Bothwell Bridge were debarred ; and then preached no more till York's Toleration, being one of the eight who gave thanks for the same, in name of the whole Church of Scotland, and who had baptized with the curate in Bathgate, and paid stipend's cess, and being an heritor there sent John Hervy, wright (who lately died there), to the enemies' camp upon a horse, to enlist his name under the dragoons' banner, which all the heritors were charged to do. . . . Their choosing such a Moderator, so guilty of our national defections of commissions and omissions, was a sufficient swatch of what members of this first Assembly was made up of— men who had sinned away zeal and faithfulness by wallowing in the sink and puddle of our national abominations of indulgences and toleration, and many otherwise guilty of sinful and shameful silence and unfaithfulness." In his *Life of Peden*, Walker speaks even more strongly. Referring to some of the Bothwell Bridge prisoners in Edinburgh accepting the " Black Bond," he alleges that they were persuaded to do so through " the cursed, subtle arguments and devices of several ministers who went into the New Yard, where they were prisoners (particularly Mr Hew Kennedie, Mr William Crichton, etc., these took their turns into the yard where the prisoners were)." The personal spite of Walker against Kennedie and his associates is quite apparent in these quotations, but doubtless his assertion that Kennedie consented to debar from the Lord's Supper at West Calder those who had been present at

Bothwell Bridge, is perfectly true. This may seem a weakening of Kennedie's testimony to his old stalwart convictions, yet we must not forget that he had to choose either to minister the sacrament to those alone who accepted the Indulgence, or to refrain from taking part in the celebration at all. He chose to move within the limits imposed, when he could not step beyond them. But that this grieved the consciences of many people may be readily understood.

An allusion of a different kind is made to Kennedie by James Nimmo of Bathgate, whose *Diary*, published by the Scottish History Society, is full of interest. Having been involved too much for his safety in the events of the time, Nimmo, in 1680, had some intention of going to Holland. He sought the advice of friends, Kennedie among the number. This is how he speaks of his interview with him. "At length I went one day to see Mr Hew Kennedie, an outed minister, w^{t} in a quarter of a myle, and told him someq^{t} of my minde anent this, who after a litle silence and turning his back to me with his hand on his breast said to me, 'I will not desire you to doe aney thing, not knowing what events may be, but if I were in yor caise, I would try a litle time abroad.' The q^{ch} made me a litle more determined to goe."

Seven years pass away before we get our next glimpse of Kennedie. Then we see him coming into touch with the youthful Renwick, who was just approaching the end of his noble career. The details of the story reveal to us the cleavage which had been asserting itself between the stricter and the more moderate sections of the Church—a cleavage most regrettable in itself, because it prevented the Presbyterians of Scotland from passing as a united band into the Church of the Revolution. At the same time, it was the occasion of a good deal of misunderstanding among men who had one common object in view. Renwick regarded the willingness of Kennedie and almost all the other ministers in the country to accept the Indulgence issued by James II. in 1687, as unfaithfulness to God, and so he drew up a Testimony of his own and handed it on the 17th January 1688, in Edinburgh, to Kennedie, who had acted as chairman of one of the General Meetings held at that time. Whether the two worthies actually met, we cannot say. Renwick's martyrdom came in a month, but during the time he was in prison, he was visited by several indulged ministers and

even by Romish priests, all eager to save him from the gallows. But the fearless youth, the last of the martyrs of the Covenant, kept his own way.

Another incident, in which Kennedie appears, brings out the deep alienation of feeling which separated those who finally approved of the Church of the Revolution from those who remained outside. It is Walker again who speaks. He is referring to the burial of the remains of the martyrs, which had been fixed upon the various gates of the city of Edinburgh. "When our friends," he says, "gathered the heads, hands and other parts of our martyrs' bodies off publick ports to the Magdalene Chapple, the magistrates threatened them; and Presbyterian ministers who had accepted the Duke of York's Popish toleration, and who then were ministers in the meeting-houses of Edinburgh, such as Mr D[avid] W[illiamson] and H[ew] K[ennedie] frowned upon them, saying, 'Will ye never be quiet?' And for that, friends would not suffer them to put their hands to a handspaik, tho' they offered." One cannot but regret that the animosity of men who, after all, were really one, should have shown itself in this bitter form.

On the granting of the final Indulgence in 1687, Kennedie returned to his old parish of Midcalder on the 6th July, but though he was in his sixty-seventh year, the Church marked him out for more conspicuous service. At a meeting, held in Edinburgh a fortnight later, of ministers who had agreed to the king's proposals, Kennedie was present and took an active part. Rules were drawn up which might serve as guiding lines to the Church in its endeavour to reconstitute Presbyterianism throughout the country. The sixteenth rule, as given by Wodrow in his *History* (iv. 432), provides "that special care be taken that Edinburgh, which is the chief city of the nation, where courts and judicatories, and persons of greatest quality reside, and which hath been most useful to suffering persons in these sad times, be specially regarded and provided with able, experienced and godly men; and in the meantime while ministers can be got to them in an orderly way, by transportation or otherwise, the respective ministers of the bounds, carefully provide them with the most able of those whom providence hath trysted to reside in the bounds." In accordance with this wise scheme, Kennedie was transferred immediately from his country charge to Edinburgh. On the 25th August 1687, he was

settled in Trinity College Church. After the Revolution this appointment was confirmed by the Town Council in whom the right of nomination was vested. The minute of the civic fathers is interesting : " 24th July, 1689. The said day the Lord Provost and Bailies of Edinburgh, having called before them the Presbyterian ministers that were formerly called by the neighbours of the Presbyterian persuasion within the town of Edinburgh, and having desired a sight of their respective calls, they find Mr Hew Kennedie, Mr James Kirkton, Mr John Law, and Mr William Erskine to have been called by them upon the 22nd day of July, 1687 years . . . and considering their fitness, ability and qualifications to be constant ministers in Edinburgh, with their peaceable deportment since their coming to the place, and that it will be good and acceptable service to the neighbours and inhabitants of the city, to call, settle, and present them to benefices by the Magistrates and Council ; We therefore the Provost, Bailies and hail common Council of Edinburgh as patrons . . . do by thir presents call, nominate and settle the said Messrs Hew Kennedie, James Kirkton, etc., constant ministers within the town of Edinburgh, in all time coming, during all the days of their lifetime." Thus early after the Revolution was Kennedie recognized as an " able, experienced and godly man," fit to minister in holy things in Scotland's famous capital.

No sooner, however, was he settled in his pulpit in Edinburgh, than malicious gossip began once more to busy itself with him. He was reported to have spoken in a slighting way of the sincerity of King William. Doubtless it is a testimony to the prominent position occupied by Kennedie that the tongue of slander thus misrepresented him. We find Lord Crawford referring to the matter in a letter to Carstares, dated the 19th December 1689. His words are : " That story about Mr Kennedie's insinuation, that he had little hopes our King would be better than his predecessor, is a mere forgery and equally foolishly invented as it is maliciously spoken ; for his caution and prudence in discourses and actings, high esteem of His Majesty and expectations from him in our Church matters, is even remarkable, beyond many of his brethren ; and upon enquiring at himself and constant hearers, that report is this day flatly disowned and all other expressions of that tendency " (*State Papers*, p. 125).

In June 1690 Kennedie preached the anniversary sermon in commemoration of the birthday of George Heriot. For this service he received from the Governors, according to their custom, the sum of " 100 merks Scots " with which to " buy books." One wonders what books the old warrior purchased with his fee.

The great honour of his life was now about to be enjoyed by Kennedie. The days of suffering and mere toleration were at an end. By the first Scottish Parliament convened by King William, Episcopacy was abolished as the established form of religion, and Presbyterianism set up in its stead. Patronage also was set aside, and the power of nominating ministers to vacant charges vested in the heritors and elders of the parish. According to Burnet, the king was displeased with the action of his Commissioner, Lord Melville, in granting this concession, as he had told him " he would not consent to take away the rights of Patronage." But this seems to be incorrect. The Leven and Melville papers plainly prove that the king gave authority to his Commissioner to take the step, if a demand for it were made. In W. Leslie Melville's *A Few Letters concerning Church Government in Scotland in 1690 from the Collection of the Earl of Leven and Melville*, there appear certain private instructions from King William to Lord Melville. One of them runs in this way —" You are to pass an act for abolishing patronages, if the Parliament shall desire the same " (p. 11). This puts the matter beyond all doubt.

The Lord Advocate, Sir James Stewart of Goodtrees, informed Wodrow that he drew up the Act abolishing Patronage along with two lawyers, and that there were associated with them three ministers, Gabriel Cunningham, Hew Kennedie and Gilbert Rule. " They were careful to give the heritors and elders of the parish power not to present but to propose and the people were to approve " (*Ana.*, i. 275). It is to be borne in mind that both of these Acts of Administration—the one abolishing Episcopacy, and the other abolishing Patronage—had their origin in the State and were approved and carried into effect by the civil power. The Church was not formally consulted about them. Parliament, ostensibly and really, was responsible for their passing.

It was in connection with these proceedings, though it is difficult to fix the exact time, that Kennedie paid the visit to London to which Rule makes reference. Along with other

deputies he went in the name of the Presbyterians, to hand an address of congratulation and loyalty to William and Mary. Of his journey to England and his experiences while there we have no record. It would have been interesting to have had handed down to us some account of his interview with the king, but no trace of it is to be found. We only know that Carstares would act as the guardian angel of the Scottish deputies.

The constitution of the Revolution Church, defective as it was in certain particulars, cannot be described here. By the decree of William, a General Assembly was called to meet in Edinburgh on the 16th October 1690. Nearly two years had gone by since the house of Stewart had disappeared. The delay was considerable, but many informal meetings had been held by ministers and elders to discuss the situation and prepare for the future. Matters were therefore well arranged in view of the Assembly in October. Various ecclesiastical historians use vague terms in speaking of the number of members in this historic gathering. Principal Story and Dr Charles G. M'Crie both err in the figures they give. The one says in his *Life of Carstares* (p. 196), " about 180 members," and the other in his *Public Worship of Presbyterian Scotland*, " about 180 ministers " (p. 246). Dr Hume Brown uses the same indefinite language (*History of Scotland*, iii. 15). It is well to give the exact number. Rule in his *Second Vindication* supplies the information. He says 116 ministers and 47 elders—163 members in all. Of the ministers, 60 were as Wodrow calls them, " antediluvians," *i.e.* men who had been ordained before the flood of persecution drove them from their charges in 1662. The remaining 56 were deemed worthy to sit along with them, inasmuch as they had been received into the ministry by the loyal minority during the period of struggle.

Two sermons were preached at the opening of the Assembly, the one by Mr Gabriel Cunningham of Dunlop, and the other by Mr Patrick Simson of Renfrew. Both preachers remembered the abortive Assembly of 1653, when Cromwell's Lieutenant drove Protesters and Resolutioners out of Edinburgh and bade them depart to their homes. Four nominations were made for the Chair—Campbell of Dumfries, afterwards known in Edinburgh from his habit of early rising, as the " Morning Star," Gilbert Rule, who by reason of continuing his studies far into the night, received the name of

the "Evening Star," George Meldrum, and Hew Kennedie. By a majority of votes Kennedie gained the presidency. The Register of the Proceedings of the General Assembly of 1690 in the library of the Church of Scotland in Edinburgh thus records the election. "A lite being agreed upon by the Assembly, out of that lite Mr Hew Kennedie, minister at Edinburgh, was chosen Moderator to this General Assembly, and he being absent, two brethren were appointed to acquaint him therewith and to desire him to take his place."

With the general work of the Assembly we do not need to concern ourselves. We can deal only with the conduct of Kennedie in the Chair. The testimony of Lord Carmichael, the royal representative, is most flattering and conclusive. In a letter to the Earl of Melville, dated the 15th November 1690, he says:—"I must not omit to signifie that Mr Kennedie who was Moderator, has managed every mater [that] cam before the Assembly so wiell, that I beg your Lordship may in your own way signifie so much to His Majestie, and if your Lordship get allowance to let him understand His Majestie is pleased will be no prejudice, he being now the chosen Moderator to the Comittee, for really he deserves it." This is indeed high praise, and if such an appreciative communication came from the king, Kennedie could not fail to be gratified. It was the earnest wish of William and his advisers in London that the work of the Assembly should be performed in a wise and generous spirit, especially in relation to the great number of Episcopalian ministers who held aloof from Presbyterianism. This, indeed, was the critical problem. If the Episcopalians had all been thrown out of office, many parishes would have been left without religious services. The Presbyterians could not supply them. The action of the Assembly in the matter is admirably described by Principal Rule, who, in referring to the liberal terms by which Episcopalians could retain their charges, provided they did not seek to overturn Presbyterianism, says:—"They and we agree in doctrine, and therefore we may teach the Church together. But we disagree in government, and therefore we cannot rule together." And again, "We exclude none of them but such as persist in their principles and inclinations to overturn the government" of the Church. Before the Assembly closed, a reply, signed by Kennedie, to the royal letter was drawn up, containing the following clauses: "We presume to acquaint your Majestie

that through the good hand of God upon us, we have in a great measure performed [our work] with that calmness and moderation which becometh the ministers of the Gospell of peace, and which your Majestie did so effectually recommend to us; having applied ourselves mostly and especially to what concerned this wholl church, and endeavoured by all means ecclesiastical and proper to us to promote the good thereof, together with the quiet of the kingdom and your Majestie's satisfaction and contentment. And God has been pleased to bliss our endeavours, in our receiving into the unity and order of this church, some who had withdrawn and now have joined with us and promised subjection, and in provyding for the propagation of religion and the knowledge of God in the most barbarous places of the Highlands, which may be the surest way of reducing these people also to your Majestie's obedience; and especially in regulating the ministry of this Church after so great revolutions and alterations; for we have, according to the use and practice of this Church ever since the first Reformation from Popery, appointed visitations, both for the southern and northern pairts of this kingdom, consisting of the gravest and most experienced ministers and elders, to whom we have given instructions about the late conformists that none of them shall be removed from their places but such as are either insufficient or scandalous or erroneous or supinely negligent, and that those of them be admitted to ministeriall communion with us, who upon due tryall and in a competent time for that tryall, shall be found to be orthodox in doctrine, of competent abilities, of a godly, peaceable and loyall conversation, and who shall be judged faithful to God and to His Government, and who shall likewise promise to own, submitt to, and concur with it."

This decision on the part of the Assembly was certain to commend itself to the King. In connection with it, it should not be forgotten that all through the controversies of the seventeenth century, the forms of worship among Episcopalians were practically the same as those among Presbyterians. No liturgy, for instance, was used by the Episcopalians except in one or two isolated cases. The struggle was all about government.

One matter the Assembly was careful to attend to before it closed. A number of the ministers during the contention between the Protesters and the Resolutioners, had received

ecclesiastical censure at the hands of their opponents. Kennedie himself had been formally deposed. This ban resting on him and others had been under consideration some years before, and its removal was authorized by the General Meeting a short time before the Assembly convened. All that was done then in the matter was ratified by the Assembly itself the day before it broke up. A little bit of humour was put into the discussion of the question by the Moderator. Some of the members were anxious to leave it alone, as being needless now to be referred to after a lapse of thirty years, especially when the old quarrel between Protesters and Resolutioners had disappeared for ever. Rule said he judged it better to bury all these things in oblivion. "Brethren," said the Moderator, "there is no need of condescending on particulars, for I believe they will be found all alike and all very honest men that are concerned." So he named Weir, Mitchell, and some others, and then added, "There is a Mr Hew Kennedie, one of the number too. I warrant ye all ken him well enough." The pleasantry of the Moderator conveyed in the Doric, which had not yet disappeared from the courts of the Church, settled the business. No more was heard of it in the Assembly, which immediately entered the following resolution in its minutes :—"The General Assembly does hereby declare all sentences passed against any ministers *hinc inde*, by any Church Judicatory upon the account of the late differences among Presbyterians from the year 1650 till the re-introduction of Prelacy, to be of themselves void and null to all effects and interests." It was perhaps good to pass such a declaratory act, as the non-conforming Covenanters were not slow to say that the Assembly of 1690 was wholly unconstitutional, because it had as its Moderator a minister still under ecclesiastical censure.

The Assembly, which sat closely for four weeks, was brought to a close on the 13th November. Ere it was dissolved, the Moderator gave out the 133rd Psalm to be sung. Cockburn in his *Account of the Assembly* says a long discussion arose regarding the date of the next Assembly. The Commissioner abruptly put a stop to it by appointing the 1st November 1691. The Assembly, he adds, was surprised, but did not call in question the competence of his act. Wodrow makes an interesting remark about the

Assembly over which Kennedie presided. "I hear it observed," he writes, "that our first Assembly, 1690, was made up of persons who may pretend to be the best Presbyterians of any Assembly ever we had; they having all of them, either as ministers, preachers or students, suffered for their principles, and certainly may be supposed best to understand them and most heartily to espouse them" (*Ana.* ii. 103.)

It was hardly to be expected that the Assembly of 1690 would escape the pungent witticism of Dr Pitcairn, and quite possibly there were circumstances connected with the meeting which lent themselves to ridicule. The well-known satirist in the preface to *The Assembly: A Comedy*, in which he tries to make fun of the doings of fathers and brethren, remarks regarding the Moderator:—"They say the Moderator is witty; and his own party call him pawky." He likens him also to "an old fox." One of the lampoons of the day preserved among the Arniston MSS. and printed in Maidment's *Scottish Pasquils*, gives currency to the lying rumour regarding the surrender of Charles I., and testifies to Kennedie's influence and zeal in the councils of the Church. Two stanzas may be quoted. The High Prince referred to is King William.

"But Kennedie for's moderation
Shall have eternal commendation;
He saved the honour of his nation
By one Newcastle market.
High Prince, reformer of our state,
To thee committed is by fate,
Great Kennedie who is thy mate,
Whom all malignants bark at.

His conquests everywhere are seen,
From Kelso even to Aberdeen;
He spares not curates, though the Queen
Hath often it requested.
He next to thee doth govern, while
Thou quells the Tories of this isle,
And thundering flashes of thy zeal
Old Prelacie hath blasted."

Of the character of Kennedie's preaching we have no account. At the opening of the Assembly of 1692, he was unable to be present. Turnbull writes in this way in his *Diary*:—"1692 Friday 15th [January]. This day the Generall Assembly sat down about 3 in the afternoon, Mr

John Law, one of the ministers of Eden[r], having preached in the forenoon in place of Mr Hew Kennedie, Moderator to the last Assembly, now unwell." Pitcairn in his *Babell* gives a little more information, from which it appears that Kennedie had met with an accident, or been seized with sudden illness in the High Street of Edinburgh. For Law is made to say in the Doctor's witty rhyme :—

> " Brethren ye all know well
> What latelie Mr Hew befell,
> Betwixt the Cross and Fountain well ;
> Since that he has been always ill
> Of head and heart and is so still.
> Therefor he made me his deput
> The Assemblie to constitute.

Kennedie never recovered from the shock he sustained. He died on the 25th April 1692, when he had just entered on the fiftieth year of his ministry, and was buried in Greyfriars Churchyard. Five children were born to him in Midcalder—John, Hew, Thomas, Margaret, and William. Besides these we know of Herbert, and two others, James and David, who were much younger. Herbert made a good name for himself. He was appointed one of the Regents in Edinburgh University in 1684. It is interesting to think that a son of the old Protester received this honourable position in the days of Episcopal ascendency. In spite of the bitter warfare that was carried on, there must have existed a good deal of kindly feeling. Or are we to suppose that Herbert left his father's faith and joined himself to the ranks of his opponents ? This could hardly be, as he continued to hold the appointment till his death in 1698. A MS. in the University of Glasgow bearing the title—*Disputationes Logicae* [*Dictates taken down by Mr John Wright*, 1694] is attributed in a letter from Principal Lee to Herbert Kennedy.

Two members of the family unfortunately made themselves amenable to the criminal court and were banished. Their misconduct is only referred to because it happens to give us an insight into the pecuniary possessions of the old Moderator. The accused were allowed to go out of prison on bail amounting to 5000 merks, guaranteed by their uncle. This sum, large in those days, was said to be their entire patrimony. If all the sons received a similar

portion from the paternal estate, the father must have been possessed of considerable wealth. His closing days were thus heavily clouded by the misdemeanours of two of his family, though he died before the final stroke fell.

It may not be said that Kennedie was a man of first rate ability, but he held a chief place both in the affections of his friends and the hatred of his foes. To be at once the object of genuine esteem and the target of many an envenomed shaft flung by the hand of malice, is no uncertain proof of a real measure of greatness and power. This was Kennedie's lot. For some mysterious reason, his opponents called him " Bitter Beard," but his friends lovingly spoke of him as " Father Kennedie."

CHAPTER II

WILLIAM CRICHTON, MODERATOR, 1692 AND 1697

WILLIAM CRICHTON, who attained twice to the honour of the Moderator's Chair, studied at Edinburgh University, where he took his degree, at the age of nineteen, on the 26th July 1649. At the close of his theological curriculum, he showed his sympathy with the Protesters by signing the Representation handed in to the General Assembly of 1652 in Edinburgh, calling in question the legality of its proceedings. It was a brave thing for an "expectant" to take up this position, and indicated a strength of conviction which was a good omen of faithfulness in the days to come. Two calls were speedily addressed to him, both from the Presbytery of Linlithgow. Setting aside the call from Strathbrock, now known as Uphall, Crichton chose to go to Bathgate, where he was ordained on the 10th April 1654, by the Protesting section of the Presbytery. We need hardly wonder at his preference for Bathgate. The people of Strathbrock were evidently strongly in favour of the Resolutioners. On the 15th June 1653, Crichton, who was living at the time within the bounds of the Presbytery of Linlithgow, was appointed by the Protesters to go "to Strathbrock next Lord's day and assey to preach there." What was involved in "asseying" to preach there is made clear from an entry in the official record of the 27th July 1653, which tells us that Mr William Browne, afterwards minister at Linlithgow, reported that "he durst not assey to preach thair for fear of violence fra the multitude of that paroche."

In Bathgate, Crichton came at once into touch with Hew Kennedie of Midcalder, and the friendship begun now continued till death brought it to a close after the dawn of the Revolution. Crichton was soon to feel the force of the antagonism between the two contending parties in the Church. In the Synod of Lothian the great majority of

the members took the laxer view of ecclesiastical policy and favoured the Resolutions of 1650. When the Synod met in February 1655, an act was passed inhibiting the minister of Bathgate from continuing his pastoral duty. Probably the bulk of the people sympathized with Crichton, though the " gentrie " were hostile to him, for he remained in Bathgate preaching in the church and apparently occupying the manse. His opponents, however, succeeded in putting into the parish, in December 1656, Mr Alexander Kynneir, formerly of Roberton; and accordingly we have the strange case of two ministers in the same charge, both claiming to be legally inducted to the cure of souls and the enjoyment of the civil endowments. An attempt was made to effect a compromise. The Synod, on the 3rd November 1658, appointed a deputation to wait on the heritors in order to arrange a competent stipend for each of the ministers. How this scheme issued does not appear, but the interesting, yet impossible, condition of affairs was brought to an end in May 1661, when Crichton, upon a petition from the heritors, was removed by the Synod, and for twenty-six years Bathgate knew him no more as its spiritual leader.

It may not be inappropriate to give a few extracts from the Session Records of Bathgate during the enforced absence of Crichton. Between 1656, when Alexander Kynneir was inducted, and 1690, three ministers occupied the charge. As is well known, the government of a congregation by the Session was not interfered with by the institution of Episcopacy. Under date 9th November 1673, we read :—" Margreat Jamesson compeired this day, who confessed yt shee has sett forth cloise to dry on the Sabbath day. The Session ordains her to confess hir fault befoir the congregatione the nixt Sabbath day." On the 8th February 1674, it is recorded that—" This day the Session beinge informed yt yr are severall in Bathgat toun who profane the Sabbath day by sellinge tobacco and pyps, therefore the Sessione inacts and ordains, that if any heerafter shall be found to comitt the foresaid abuses, to pay five pounds Scots money, and mak publick satisfactione before the congregatione." On the 5th February 1686, " The Sessione ordains tuo of yr number each Sabbath to wire (watch over) the toun of Bathgat in time of sermon." Another entry shows the effect of the Indulgence of 1687

on the attendance at the parish church and on the collections. Crichton by this time was back, holding services at Hilderstone in the immediate neighbourhood. His presence sufficiently explains the decrease in the offerings. "February 9, 1689. Collections and mariage money from the 14th of May eightie eight to the twentie seventh of Jary eightie nyn . . . the sum of twentie ane pounds eleven shillin; debursements £78, 3s. 0d. Scots money. The reason why the debursements exceeds so far the collections is because the collection and mariage money since the indulgence ar become verie inconsiderable." The return of Crichton to his old people was evidently most welcome.

After his eviction from Bathgate, twelve years pass away before we meet again with the name of Crichton. When the second Indulgence was granted in 1672, permission was given to him to exercise his ministry at Beith, but unlike some of his brethren who felt themselves able to accept the terms of that Indulgence, Crichton refused to be bound by them. For his refusal he was denounced by the Privy Council on the 6th November 1673, and cited to compear before them in sixty days. As he did not mean to comply with the order issued against him, he was forced to remain in retirement. Wodrow speaks of a conventicle held at Hilderstone in 1670, which possibly was addressed by Crichton. "Elizabeth Cunningham," he says, "Lady Hilderston, May 12th, is fined by the Council in four hundred merks for one conventicle held in her house," but further information is not given.

Certain interesting references are made to Crichton in the *Diary* of James Nimmo, who was a native of Bathgate and a strenuous supporter of the Covenant. The statements of Nimmo seem to imply that Crichton was still living in the neighbourhood of his old sphere of work. "About the beginning of Janrij, 1676," he writes, "I fell into a fever . . . At qch time also my father was lying sick. And Mr William Crichton (who was our outted minister) coming to see him, I had also the favor of his visit, who after talking a litle bit with me, and finding my words someq[r] concerned lyke, he took occasion to speak yet more—telling me q[t] a miserable state we were in by nature, and that Christ was offering salvation upon repentance, and that we were called to come, as it wer, upon the legs of faith under the

sense of our condition, q[ch] if we were seriouslie aiming at, he wold assist and undertake for us and teach us our dewtie, the which had some impression upon my minde." Nimmo, who was present at Bothwell Bridge and had been declared an outlaw on that account, made up his mind to seek refuge in Holland. An unfavourable wind delayed him at Bo'ness. An opportune offer to act as chamberlain in Morayshire to Hay of Park, decided him to remain in this country. He thus writes on the 19th August 1680 :—" Being that day disapoynted [about Holland] I minded Mr Wm Crichton our outted minister, whom I saw at Mr Kennedie's some few dayes before, had said he wold desire half an hour of me at his chamber at Ballancrieff, and thoght now I might goe to him from Borrowstouness. And accordingly went, and finding when I came, the Ladey and him sitting together in the hall, and after a litle conference, the said Mr Crichton was obleeged to go to one that called for him." Ballencrieff, a small property just outside Bathgate, the mansion-house of which has now disappeared, seems to have afforded Crichton most hospitable shelter from time to time. Its inmates were his loyal supporters. Nimmo does not mention his old minister's name again. How far Crichton approved of his connection with Bothwell Bridge we are not told, but the stalwart set of Covenanters were in no way satisfied with Crichton's attitude in the matter. It was one of the grievances of Patrick Walker that Crichton with other ministers visited the prisoners from Bothwell Bridge in Greyfriars Churchyard and was instrumental in getting some of them to sign the " Black Bond," by which they declared they would never again take up arms against the Crown. The arguments Crichton and his friends used to achieve their purpose, the old pedlar could only describe as " cursed."

In 1684, Crichton was in Edinburgh, when he was visited by Erskine of Carnock. On the 2nd January of that year, Erskine writes :—" I was seeing Mr John Law [and] Mr Ctn."; and again on the 1st February—" Mr William Crichton dined with us in the change house." A MS. preserved in the Advocates' Library gives us another link with Crichton, who was on intimate terms with John Carstares and frequently saw him on his death-bed. The document is entitled, " The last words of Mr John Carstares, sometime minister of the gospel at Glasgow, as they were taken from

his own mouth when adying, anno 1685 or 1686, by Mr William Crichton, sometime minister of the gospel at Edinburgh." The intimacy between Crichton and William Carstares was also very close in later years.

On the publication of the final Indulgence in 1687, Crichton returned to his charge in Bathgate. For fifteen years, the curate, William Man by name, had been settled in the parish, holding it for Episcopacy. At the Revolution the people discharged him. Till he was removed, Crichton conducted services at Hilderstone, which lay within the adjoining parish of Torphichen, where a temporary place of worship had been provided by the sympathetic family of Sandilands. On the 30th November 1687, along with three other ministers, Crichton constituted anew the Presbytery of Linlithgow. One of the earliest matters which engaged his attention on his re-settlement in Bathgate, was the state of education in the parish. Apparently for several years there had been no teacher employed to teach in the school. At a meeting of Session on the 6th November 1687, the minister reported that in order to remedy this deplorable condition of affairs, he had arranged for the appointment of a regular schoolmaster. The Session at once ratified the appointment. One other reference only needs to be made to Crichton in connection with the days of greater liberty which preceded the Revolution. Patrick Walker, who was always on the outlook for defections in those who accepted the Revolution Settlement, charges Wodrow with being in error in saying that no Presbyterian kept the day of prayer and thanksgiving appointed by James II. on the 17th January 1688, because of the prospect of an heir being born to the throne. Walker asserts that Crichton observed the day at Hilderstone, and prayed for the preservation of the queen and child.

Before the Assembly of 1690, of which he was a member, Crichton took an active part in the preliminary conferences which were held in Edinburgh. Along with Hew Kennedie, he was appointed to go to London to wait on King William in regard to the affairs of the Church. When the first Assembly met no one would rejoice more heartily than Crichton to see his old co-presbyter placed in the seat of honour.

The second Assembly after the Revolution was appointed to meet in November 1691, but William, irritated at the

unwillingness of the special ecclesiastical commissioners to admit to membership in the Church Courts, those Episcopal ministers whom they were quite ready to leave in their parishes as spiritual teachers, postponed the Assembly for two months. When it met on the 15th January 1692, the letter from the Crown, read by the Lord High Commissioner, the Earl of Lothian, indicated in a very plain way the annoyance felt by the king. Three nominations were made for the Chair. The choice fell on William Crichton. Pitcairn, who satirizes this Assembly in his *Babell* with great keenness and a good deal of vulgarity, thus describes the opening proceedings which were conducted by John Law in the absence of Kennedie. After referring to the ex-moderator's illness, Law is represented as saying—

> "Therefor with diligence and speed
> Unto election let's proceed.
> With him the Brethren all agree,
> And for the place they named three.
> But after due deliberatione,
> Two unfit were for the station,
> Because they were for Moderation.
> (This is a most malignant devil
> That to the Whigs does meikle evill).
> The third was only found of merite,
> Who double portion did inherite
> Of the last Moderator's spirit
> As to his zeall, but had no wit,
> As the old fox, to manage it.
> For in a word he was a squyre,
> Composed all of earth and fire.

Whether Pitcairn in calling Crichton a squire, means to indicate that he was of a fairly high social position, it is quite impossible to determine. The Assembly over which Crichton was thus called to preside, was composed of 115 ministers and 62 elders, "a set of men much younger and hotter spirited than the last," says Lord Polwarth in writing about it to the Earl of Portland. "The Moderate party," he adds, "was the smallest, there being not more than 50 disposed to union with those who had conformed to prelacy." He describes Crichton as "a man of somewhat violent character" (*Marchmont Papers*, iii. 406).

The most important business which fell to be discharged by the Assembly was naturally connected with the subject which was mentioned in the king's letter—the relation of the Church to the conforming curates. No objection was

entertained towards those of them who believed in the government of the Church by bishops, being retained in their work and in the enjoyment of their stipends, provided they were of sound doctrine and of good character. The question in debate was : Shall these men, so strongly opposed to Presbyterianism, sit and rule in the Courts of the Presbyterian Church ? At the same time, William contended that the Commission of Assembly appointed to deal in this matter should be composed in equal parts of Presbyterians and Episcopalians. This the General Assembly was not prepared to allow. A month passed and the king's request seemed no nearer fulfilment. Lord Lothian thereupon peremptorily dissolved the Assembly in the name of the king. His speech may be given. " You have now," he said, " sat for about a month, which was a competent time both to have done what was the principal design in calling the Assembly—the uniting you with your brethren—and also to have attended to other matters affecting the Church ; but his Majesty perceiving no great inclination among you to comply with his demands, hath commanded me to dissolve the present Assembly ; so I, in his Majesty's name and authority, do dissolve this General Assembly."

This action of the Lord High Commissioner revealed one of the weak points in the Revolution Settlement, which unfortunately contained no explicit reference to the right of the Church to regulate its own procedure in calling and dismissing Assemblies. The claim of the king's representative could not be admitted. Crichton asked if no day was to be appointed for the meeting of another Assembly. Lothian simply replied that the king would attend to that matter. " Thereupon," says Wodrow, who has given us full details of the scene in his *Analecta*, " the Moderator desired to be heard a few words. The Commissioner answered he could not hear him as Moderator. ' In whatever capacity your Grace pleases,' said the other, and added, that the Assembly acknowledged all obligations to His Majesty, and if his commands had been in any or all their worldly concerns they would have yielded ; but the Assembly being dissolved without indyting another to a certain day, he could not forbear to declare that the office bearers in the house of God have a spirituall, intrinsic power from Jesus Christ, the only head of his Church, to meet in Assemblyes about the affairs thereof, the necessity of the same being first

represented to the magistrate. Therefore he craved that such dissolution might not be to the prejudicing of yearly General Assemblys granted by the laws of the kingdome. The members rose all up and declared their adherence to what the Moderator had said. The Moderator offered prayer, but the members by a generall cry pressed to name a dyet for the nixt Generall Assembly. The Moderator proposed at Edinburgh, the third Wensday of Agust, 1693. The members again with one voice declared their approbation; upon all which instruments were taken, the Moderator concluded with prayer and singing 133 Psalm. The Commissioner gave in his above mentioned speech in writing, and required the same to be recorded."

Certainly King William, if responsible for the act of his High Commissioner, took a step calculated to alienate from himself the feeling of the Church of Scotland. However, we have only to deal with the part played by Crichton in the Assembly. His dignified action in the Chair, after the Earl of Lothian threw his Erastian bomb on the floor of the Supreme Court, justified the choice of the majority of his brethren in calling him to preside over them. With the assertion of the Church's right to rule in its own sphere, ministers and elders for the most part were content to abide.

The third Wednesday of August came round, but no General Assembly was constituted. A compromise had been effected by the tact of Secretary Johnston, the son of the old Covenanter, Lord Wariston. The king had no intention of recognizing the day named by the Assembly, and the Church was stedfast in its determination to meet in accordance with its own appointment. The situation was critical, but Johnston saved it. He persuaded the Church to withhold its claim, on the understanding that Parliament should petition the king to summon a new Assembly. This was done by Parliament, and the king appointed a day in November, just three months after the time fixed by the Assembly, though as the day drew near, he altered the arrangement and fixed the 29th March 1694. In this way the dispute between the Church and the State came temporarily to an end. The strict Covenanters, however, found in this compromise a fresh reason for their independent position and were not slow to fasten on the Established Church a charge of unfaithfulness. Hepburn, in his *Humble Pleadings for the Good old Way*, makes much

of it, and it may be readily admitted that he could state a fairly good case.

After his elevation to the Moderator's chair, Crichton received a call to Falkirk, which he accepted. He was admitted to his new charge on the 23rd August 1693. Of his ministry here no information has reached us. His nephew, George Turnbull, then of Alloa, and afterwards of Tyningham, refers in his *Diary* to a severe illness from which Crichton suffered at this time. Under date 17th February 1695, he tells us he was preaching at Falkirk—" Mr Crichton being unwell." The indisposition must have been of a passing nature, for in a short time Crichton was appointed by the Town Council of Edinburgh to the charge of the Tron Church. He accepted the nomination and was duly inducted on the 8th September 1695. As he was now in his sixty-fifth year, we see that a man in those old days was not deemed unfit for work even though he had passed the grand climacteric. It is a testimony, however, to the strength of his physical constitution, that the City Fathers regarded him as capable of undertaking the arduous duties of a large parish, especially when his colleague in the charge, George Meldrum, was about the same age. Perhaps they showed their wisdom by thinking, that even if Crichton had lost some of the fire of his youth, he more than made up for it by the ripeness of his experience.

Additional honour was conferred upon him in 1697, when he was elected for the second time to the Chair of the General Assembly. It may be thought that the rewards in the power of the Church to bestow should have gone round, especially when there were men who had served the Church well and had endured the great persecution. There must have been something peculiarly worthy in Crichton's character and service, when his brethren deemed it fitting to ask him to preside over them in such circumstances twice within a brief space of years. About Crichton's second Assembly one thing only need be noted. It was during it that the well-known Barrier Act, which has been the Church's safeguard against hasty legislation, was passed. The Assembly itself during all its sessions was of a most peaceful character. George Turnbull, with a justifiable feeling of pride for his uncle, says about it—" This was a most comfortable Assembly."

Crichton attended with great diligence to his ministerial

work in Edinburgh and gained the approbation of the Town Council and of his parishioners. Elizabeth West only once mentions his name. The date is 1702. "On Thursday, being the fast-day," she writes, "I was in a very ill frame, nothing suitable to the duty of the day. The sermons had little effect on me, if it was not in the afternoon, where Mr William Crichton was on Amos vii. 2. I thought there was something of the spirit of God, witnessed with him, speaking of the pardon of sin." Two more references to him are afforded by the *Diary* of his nephew in Tyningham. In December 1702, he records:—"Having caused draw Mr Will. Crichton his picture and got it out of Eden^r., I caused putt it up in the western chamber, as a remembrance of my worthy relation and kind benefactor." One would like to have more information about the benefactions conferred by Crichton on his youthful friend. It might throw more light than we have on Crichton's family history. The portrait, which Turnbull secured of his esteemed uncle, cannot be traced to-day. Possibly it may be in the possession of some of Turnbull's descendants. Four of his sons were ministers. Two of his great-grandsons filled high public offices. One of them was Sir David Dundas, Commander-in-Chief of the British Army, and the other Sir Robert Dundas, of Dunira, one of the Principal Clerks of Session. Turnbull says again, in speaking of the Assembly of 1704 which he attended—"I lodged all this time att Mr Crichtons."

Infirmity now began to creep upon the minister of the Tron Church. The City Records of the 24th May 1704, speak of him as "aged and valetudinarie," and unable to undertake his full share of pastoral duty. Three years later he found it necessary to resign his charge, but the Presbytery were unwilling that he should break his official connection with the Church. They sent, accordingly, on the 4th June 1707, a deputation to the Town Council to present their plea that Crichton "should still be looked upon as one of the ministers of Edinburgh, although from his great age and valetudinary state of health, he was excused from the exercise of that charge. And the Presbytery recommended to the Council to give him a token of their respects during life and thereby signifie their inclinations to continue his relation to them." On the 16th July, in acknowledgment of "the vigilance, prudence, piety and zeal" with which he had performed his duties the Council granted him a yearly allowance

of 1000 merks Scots. He did not enjoy their kindness long. He died on the 27th November 1708, in the seventy-eighth year of his age and the fifty-fifth of his ministry.

In the Advocates' Library there is preserved a copy of a two-leaved sheet with black edges, containing an anonymous admirer's eulogistic meditation in Latin on Crichton's character and work. A paraphrase also of the lines is given in English. The title in Latin runs—

In Obitum

Desideratissimi V. D. M. Edinburgensis

D. Gul. Creghton.

Though the lines do not possess any poetic merit, they were doubtless treasured by many of his old people. This notice of him may fitly close with the paraphrase in English.

"Composed to sleep on Saturn's ominous night,
For worship till the signal should invite,
A melancholy knell beat through mine ears,
This sound—Our Creghton's dead ! needs no more prayers ;
The Fathers and the whole Prophetic race
Are gone and like them Creghton's gone to peace.
How didst thou, sacred sone, such light procure
Of God and Christ ? Tell me, I thee adjure !
How pierced thou through the dark Mosaic vail !
Read gospel truths ; or didst thou ever faill
Them to believe and love ? Nay, but them fast
Mentain'd, amidst the evils us harast ;
How great thy zeal (yet moderat) for Christ's cause,
Sacred it might be kept in every clause.
Thy mein and habite grave with th' Ancients vy'd,
Simplicity in worship, Scotland's pride !
Scotland thee boasts, its churches friend most true,
'Gainst trained prelates and th' Hierarchal crew.
I shan't forbear to speak thy divine art
With God in prayer, though humble, yet some times parte
By which suck'd up to God above the sky
Minds earthly, drowned in sin that lay ;
Thousands their last breathed in Jesus' breast,
Helped by thy skill, with sweetest tongue exprest ;
No wonder, for in him burnt the self-same fire,
Which did th' apostles with sacred truth inspire ;
Spent with his sacred toil, his nature rest
Required, he obeyed, with saints is blest ;
Our great Creghton's dead. Shall time out-wear
His memory ? It shan't be so, while tongues there are '

CHAPTER III

JOHN LAW, MODERATOR, 1694

John Law belonged to a family of considerable importance. His paternal grandfather, who died in 1632, the year of John's birth, was first Bishop of Orkney and then Archbishop of Glasgow. The second wife of the Archbishop was Grissal Boswell, a member of the well-known house of Auchinleck. Their son, Thomas, the father of the future Moderator, became minister of Inchinnan, but was deposed for "malignancy and other scandals" in 1648. This phrase simply means that being of Episcopalian tendencies, he approved of the Engagement issued by Charles I., and on that account was deprived of his living by the unbending Covenanting party. The minister of Inchinnan's wife was Jean, daughter of Sir Robert Hamilton of Silverton Hill, Stonehouse. As John Law was a strong supporter of the stricter section of the Church, it is interesting to notice the ecclesiastical sympathies of his immediate ancestors. The prelate, who held the see of Glasgow, was a full-blown believer in the Episcopal government of the Church. His son in Inchinnan leaned so strongly in the same direction as to receive the condemnation of the stalwart Presbyterians. John, who was seventeen years old at the death of his father, broke away completely from the position his forebears occupied, and became a noted upholder of the views they rejected. His action in this respect marks him out as a man of strong individuality. It is not, of course, possible to tell what induced him to take up a different attitude from his father toward the burning question of the day. His later life shows him to be full of religious earnestness, and doubtless he came early under serious impressions. At the time, Scotland was enjoying unwonted peace during Cromwell's rule, and the nation's thoughts were largely directed to spiritual things. Kirkton's description of the prevailing state of religion though highly coloured, is memorable. "I verily believe," he says, "there were more souls converted

JOHN LAW

to Christ in that short period of time, than in any season since the Reformation, though of triple its duration." Law breathed this religious atmosphere in his youth, and inasmuch as he thought out and solved for himself the great problems of a living personal creed and the most satisfactory form of Church government, we must regard him as one of the strong men in the ranks of the Presbyterian Church. His brother Robert, who was minister of New Kilpatrick, and is remembered with gratitude as the author of the interesting *Memorialls*, which bear his name, likewise threw off the hereditary yoke of Episcopacy, and helped to fight the battle of religious freedom, suffering much in its cause ere victory came.

Educated, as we may suppose, under the care of his father and at the parish school of Inchinnan, Law proceeded in due course to the University of Glasgow, where he graduated M.A. in 1653. In theology he listened to the lectures of Principal Patrick Gillespie and Professor Robert Baillie. Having completed his curriculum, he received license, and very speedily, in 1656, was ordained by the Protesters to the parish of Campsie. The only reference that seems to be extant to this period of his life is furnished by Baillie, who knew him well, but who, as his manner is, speaks slightingly of one who belonged to the other side of church politics. "In Campsie likewise," he says, "one Mr Archibald Denniston was deposed by them without any considerable cause, much to my grief and against the hearts of his parish who loved him. They have planted Mr J. Law, within these three years brought from a pottinger to be laureated." If Law, in order to help himself in his studies after his father's death, pursued the calling of an apothecary, we hardly see why his old professor should jeer at him so unworthily. In the *Old Statistical Account* of Campsie, the writer, quoting from Baillie, calls him a "poor baxter callan, who had but lately left his trade." A knowledge of baking, however, as well as of medicine, would not come amiss to Law in later years.

Before he was settled in Campsie, his ability as a preacher was recognized. Even such a judge of ministerial qualifications as Durham wished to bring him to Glasgow to fill the pulpit of the High Church. The proposal fell through, but Durham's approbation is no mean certificate. Law remained in Campsie for six years, but of his ministry there, no special

record is to be met with. Visits, which he paid at different periods of his long life to his early sphere of work in the trying circumstances of the time, prove the interest he took in his people, and the affection with which they viewed him. We find it difficult to-day to understand the violent feelings which existed between the two great parties in the Church, and which carried them so far that each section, when it had the power, deposed those who belonged to the rival camp. Yet Law, intruded in this way into Campsie, seems to have gained the goodwill of his parishioners, and commended himself to them by his diligence and faithfulness.

The Black Act of 1662 severed the connection between Law and the charge to which he was ordained, and for many years thereafter he wandered about his native land, fearlessly preaching the gospel. God had called him to declare his message of grace, and in the true spirit of consecration he would not allow men to shut his mouth. Mention is made of him conducting services in various parts of the country. In 1665 we find him busily preaching at Kirkcaldy, where Robert Blair and other noted ministers were living at the time. He took part, in 1670, in the "clandestine" ordination at Kippen of Mr Archibald Riddell. For a time, too, he appears to have lived at Monteith, and in the *Scots Worthies* an interesting proof is given to us of the effect of his preaching on Robert Garnock, who in 1681 suffered for the Covenanting cause in Edinburgh. The incident took place a good many years before, while Garnock was still a young man. Howie says: "Sometime after this Mr Law preached at his own house in Monteith, and one Mr Hutchison sometimes at Kippen. Being one Saturday evening gone out to his grandmother's house in the country, and having an uncle who frequented these meetings, [Garnock] went along with him to a place called Shieldbrae. And next Sabbath he went with him, through great difficulty, being then but young, through frost and snow, and heard Mr Law at Monteith; which sermon, through a divine blessing, wrought much upon his mind. Thus he continued for a considerable time to go out in the end of the week for an opportunity of hearing the gospel, and to return in the beginning of next week to Stirling." This method of spending the week-end is in striking contrast to the custom at present in vogue.

Another reference to Law's wanderings is furnished by

the *Old Statistical Account* of the parish of Kippen. In the year 1676, we are told " the sacrament of the Lord's Supper was dispensed in the night to a very numerous meeting at Arnbeg." In this service Mr Law took part. When the Indulgence of 1672 was granted, Law was appointed to go to Irvine and preach, but he refused to accept the appointment, doubtless because of his unwillingness to have his commission from Christ determined by the civil magistrate. When summoned before the Privy Council to answer for his declinature, he boldly paid no heed. On the 4th June 1674, an order for his apprehension was issued, and 1000 merks offered to any one who made him prisoner. In a few weeks he was lodged, along with his brother Robert, in the Tolbooth of Edinburgh. Both brothers were, as Wodrow tells us, " discharged to keep conventicles under certification of being repute, punished and pursued as seditious persons, and obliged to give each of them bond and caution for 5000 merks to appear when called " (*Hist.*, ii. 270). No sooner was Law released than he started on another round of preaching. The curates were specially enraged at him. In the *Grievances given in by several Presbyteries of the Diocese of Glasgow, October 22nd, 1674*, it is complained " that in the Presbytery of Dumbarton, conventicles are kept by Mr John Law; that he baptized children and married persons, and also took part in licensing and ordaining probationers." He was charged, likewise, with preaching in various pulpits, at the desire of heritors and parishioners. Accordingly he was summoned to appear before the Council on 7th December 1676. His indictment runs in these words: " Contrary to the several laws and acts of Parliament of this kingdom," from May 1674 to October 1676, the said Mr John Law " hath taken upon him to preach, expound scripture, pray and exercise the other functions of the ministry, at diverse houses and field conventicles, and has convocated diverse numbers of people thereto; and particularly at Campsie, Baldernock, Kilpatrick, Kippen and diverse other places or near to the same, where he hath baptized and married diverse persons in a disorderly manner . . . and hath invaded diverse churches and pulpits, into which he has intruded himself. . . . Like as, the said Mr John Law hath presumed to appoint and ordain several persons to the office and work of the ministry . . . albeit he hath not authority approved by the laws of the kingdom for that

effect." As Law declined to compear before the Council, letters were ordained "to be directed to messengers-at-arms, to denounce him His Majesty's rebel, and to put him to the horn, and to escheat and inbring all his moveable goods and gear to his Majesty's use, for his contempt." In this sentence nothing is lacking to show the thoroughness of the policy of the government to crush to pieces the supporters of the Covenant.

A striking proof of the affection of his old people in Campsie for him is to be found in the fact that, in order to have him as much as possible with them, they erected a house for him to live in, and also a building which might serve as a place of worship. This action is most creditable to them, but the Privy Council would not stand such flagrant opposition to their instructions. On 26th March 1678, they ordered "the heritors to demolish at once the meeting house erected for Mr Law." By an act of grace the dwelling house was allowed to remain. The people of Campsie were strong in their attachment to the good old way. About this time, Wodrow tells us, several hundreds gathered together in arms and killed one of the soldiers. Early in the following year, we find Law taking part in conventicles in the house of Sir William Fleming of Ferm, whose wife was a staunch supporter of the outed ministers.

The courageous refusal of Law to submit himself to the decree of the Privy Council, made his oppressors all the more eager to capture him once more. At last they were successful. News had reached Law of the serious illness of his wife. The physicians considered her case hopeless. On his way to Campsie to see her, he came to the house of the laird of Kincaid, not far from his old home. Here he was seized. No entreaties he presented to his captors, and no security he offered in support of his promise to surrender himself at any time they appointed, availed. Without being allowed to see his wife, he was hurried away to Edinburgh. This is Wodrow's account. But in a letter preserved in the *Wodrow Collection of MSS.* written by Mr John Carstares on the 20th March 1679, and addressed to Mr Robert M'Ward, a different version of the incident is given. "Sweet, serious and successful Mr John Law," he says, "was apprehended at his own house in Campsie, and I was hearing yesterday (whereof I am not absolutely certain), that his worthy wife died within three or four

hours after he was taken from her, having been long sick before, but a little better then." As the monument erected over Law's grave records the death of his wife, Isabel Cunningham, in 1703, it seems that Mrs Law recovered from her severe illness, unless, indeed, Law was twice married. Carstares' letter is interesting, for his appreciative reference to his afflicted friend.

On being brought to Edinburgh, Law was ordered by the Council, on the 4th of April, to be taken to the Bass Rock, but his judges so far relented as to approve on the 27th of May of his release, "upon caution to appear when called, upon bond of a thousand merks," and likewise on the condition that the Archbishop of Glasgow should give a testimonial in his favour. Apparently the successor of his grandfather in the western see was unwilling to furnish the required certificate, for Law remained a prisoner in the sea-girt fortress till, upon the promulgation of the third Indulgence of Charles on the 11th of July 1679, he and seven other ministers were set at liberty, "without any other engagement, but that they should live peaceably and not take up arms against us or our authority, or find caution to answer when called on." The alternative condition was accepted by Law and his friends. The Council pressed them to submit to the first condition and undertake to "live peaceably," *i.e.* to refrain from holding conventicles. They tried even by an additional term of imprisonment, to bring them to agree to this, but they all refused to come under the obligation. Eventually they were set free, binding themselves only under a penalty of 10,000 merks each, to appear before the Council when called. Who acted as Law's cautioner for this large sum is not stated.

On his release, his old parishioners in Campsie appealed to the Privy Council for permission to have him back again as their minister. This request was granted on the 18th of December. As far as can be gathered, he continued to labour among them till 1681, when through his inability to take the Test, he was forced again to renew his weary life of wandering. On this occasion he travelled beyond the limits of his native land, and like many of his brethren enjoyed a time of rest in Holland. He went thither in the company of his friend, Erskine of Carnock, whose *Diary*, published by the Scottish History Society, reveals a warm intimacy between him and the banished minister of Campsie.

They saw a great deal of each other in Edinburgh where Law was able frequently to preach. Thus under date, 22nd July 1683, Erskine writes that "he heard Mr John Law preach twice." On the 11th November he heard him again. On the 2nd January in the following year, he says, "I was seeing Mr John Law," and on the 26th February, "Mr John Law dined with my Lady and Ensign Preston." Next day he makes this entry: "I was afternoon with Alva, and at night with Mr Thomas Riggs, where was Mr John Law and his son," who must have been a student in Edinburgh at the time. On the 1st January 1685, Erskine records: "Mr John Law was a while with my Lady." References of this kind show that Law, though driven from his parish, had a degree of liberty which enabled him to enjoy the society of his friends and to preach as opportunity occurred. During this period, Erskine entertained the idea of going to Carolina. He consulted his friend about it, who said: "It was a serious business, requiring great deliberation, and desired me to set aside some portion of time for prayer that I might earnestly and seriously ask counsel of God." The project was not carried out, and instead of going across the Atlantic, Erskine proceeded to Holland, taking Law with him. A passport was needed. The magistrates of Edinburgh gave him one on the 9th January 1685, authorizing him "to goe furth of this kingdom to Holland or France to studie the law," along with John Law as his servant. Possibly this was the simplest way for Law to leave the country, and in a real sense he was Erskine's ministerial servant. The magistrates, too, could not but be aware of the identity of his companion. On the following day they embarked at Leith for London, where we find them on the 21st. On that day Erskine writes in his *Diary*: "I dined with Mr Robert Cunningham, . . . Mr John Law being with us." They took ship for Holland on the 26th March, Erskine noting at the same time, that he and Law had lived together in the same house during the whole of their stay in London.

By his visit to the Dutch dominions and his association with Scottish brethren, temporarily or permanently residing in them, Law would be able to see speedily for himself how events were beginning to shape themselves politically, and to form his own conclusions as to the likelihood of brighter days dawning in Britain, through the intervention of the Dutch Prince. Doubtless he met Carstares, but that most

diplomatic of men could always keep his own and his master's secrets. Of his stay in Holland we have no particulars, but Law was back in London in June 1687. In that month he took part with other ministers in licensing George Turnbull, afterwards minister of Tyningham, and in February of the following year, likewise in London, he helped to ordain him (*Scot. Hist. Soc. Miscel.* i. 321; 326).

Whether Law remained in London during the eight months which elapsed between Turnbull's license and his ordination, cannot be determined, but as in July 1687, the Indulgence of James II. was published, it is quite possible that Law came back to Scotland. At any rate on the 21st July 1687, a large gathering of ministers took place in Edinburgh and agreed to accept the royal Toleration. They proceeded to draw up overtures with a view to the re-organization of the Church throughout the land. As one of these bears on Law's future, it is here transcribed as given by Wodrow :—"That special care be taken that Edinburgh, which is the chief city of the nation, where courts and judicatories and persons of greatest quality reside, and which hath been most useful to suffering persons in these sad times, be specially regarded and provided with able, experienced and godly men." On the following day, Law, Kennedie, Kirkton, and William Erskine were chosen to look after the interests of the Church in Edinburgh. After the Revolution, Law and his companions were appointed by the Town Council to be ministers of the city. The deed appointing them is dated the 24th July 1689, and constitutes them, along with Alexander Hamilton and Gilbert Rule, "constant ministers within the town of Edinburgh in all time coming, during all the days of their lifetime." On account of this call to Edinburgh, Law was unable to accept the offer of Parliament, in 1690, to return to his old parish of Campsie.

Law evidently began his work immediately in the Scottish capital. His friend Turnbull, who assisted him occasionally, thus writes in his *Diary* :—"1688, Sunday, Sept. 2. Preached in Magdalene Chapell in Edinburgh for Mr John Law." This reference probably indicates that Law held services in the chapel of St Mary Magdalene in the Cowgate, until he was settled in the High Church in 1692. A glimpse of the busy days ministers had, and of the many matters they had to arrange, is afforded by another entry of Turnbull's :—"1688, Sept. 12. There mett a general

meeting of ministers, Mr John Law being moderator. They dismissed again, Fryday 14th."

As a leader of the Church, Law took his full share in all the work that required to be done for its welfare and efficiency. In Edinburgh he was at the centre of affairs, and in touch with all that took place. Soon after the close of the first Assembly, he went along with David Blair to Holland, in order to convey to King William the reply of the Church to the royal letter, in which the king had made it clear, that he expected the Episcopalian ministers to be admitted on certain conditions to the Presbyterian Church. On the 15th June 1691, William replied to the Assembly's document in these terms :—" By the letter presented to us from you, by Mr John Law and Mr David Blair, ministers, your two commissioners, we do perceive you sufficiently understand our intentions." As this was the earliest communication from the Church in Scotland to the king, the fact that Law was entrusted to be the bearer of it along with Blair, is a proof of the confidence his brethren placed in him. To be chosen for such a mission was no mean honour. William's reply was written from Aprebaux.

Serious matters soon again engaged the attention of the Church. The scene which took place between Crichton and the king's commissioner at the close of the Assembly of 1692 had issued in an extremely awkward situation. When the day appointed by the Moderator for the convening of the next Assembly arrived—the third Wednesday of August 1693—only a few members appeared at the door of the High Church, in which the meetings were usually held. Hog of Carnock says just two or three had the courage to present themselves. Neither Crichton nor the Clerk, though both were said to be in town, attended. Few Presbyteries, moreover, had elected representatives. The king had declined to call an Assembly, and the Church as a whole agreed to take no step to implement the decision of 1692. It simply waited for William to move in the matter, and made no protest. This act of submission to royal authority, so Erastian in its character, was naturally regarded by the sterner set of Presbyterians as a hauling down of the flag of Christ, and they did not fail to say so. Hog, who thoroughly disapproved of the weakness displayed, even tells us that certain ministers met privately in Edinburgh and sent an address to William and Mary, asking the appoint-

ment of a new Assembly, and expressing regret at the disorder which showed itself in the preceding year. Hog's sorrow reached its height when a new Assembly was called by trumpet blast from the old market cross, as if it were a civil court under the complete jurisdiction of the Crown. In this proceeding, the Church calmly acquiesced.

It is difficult to justify the action of the ecclesiastical leaders in this matter. Without doubt, it would have been better to have made a firm stand, and in spite of the king's will, have met in General Assembly. Possibly men's minds were a little bit divided as to the wisest path to be followed. William, to whom Presbyterians owed so much, was at the moment busy in the Netherlands, carrying on a war which called for all his thought and attention. In these circumstances, therefore, it is not for us to blame the majority in the Church for following the path of caution and peace. We only remember that the men who adopted this course had behind them a record for courage and conscientiousness, which they had kept unstained during all the years of the sore persecution. It could not have been craven fear or unworthy cowardice which prompted now their conduct. Still, our sympathies must go out to Hog in his honest lament over the irresoluteness displayed by the leaders of the Church.

Concurrently with this question of the calling of an Assembly, another matter was agitating the ecclesiastical world. The king emphatically insisted that the acceptance of the Oath of Abjuration and the Oath of Assurance should be a condition of membership in the highest court of the Church. Ministers and elders might be returned by Presbyteries as commissioners to the General Assembly, but their election was null and void, unless they formally took the vow acknowledging William to be king *de jure* and *de facto*. Now Law, with other leaders in the Church, had not the slightest objection to come under the required stipulation, so long as it was regarded merely as a civil enactment. They were loyal subjects of the Crown and were ready to take the oath as citizens. Mr Secretary Johnston, son of old Wariston, in a letter to Carstares on the 16th May 1693, says :—" Mr Law, Mr Crichton and all I could speak to, are convinced and satisfied " (*State Papers*, p. 177). But the moment the acceptance of the double oath was made a condition of membership in the Assembly, Caesar was seen to be intruding on the domain of Christ, and the demand was

resolutely opposed. Carstares' dramatic intervention as recorded in M'Cormick's *Life of Carstares*, brought the Church out victorious, but only in the nick of time. Members had gathered together in Edinburgh on the morning of the 29th March. No one knew what would take place. The king had refused to alter his demand and recall the objectionable decree. Lord Carmichael, the king's Commissioner, could not go beyond his orders. They bound him to dismiss the Assembly if ministers and elders declined to take the oath. But just when the critical moment had almost arrived, and the delay of a few hours would have raised a storm of indignation against the king all over the land, the royal messenger appeared bearing the fresh instructions framed by Carstares, which acknowledged the rights of the Church, and enabled members with grateful hearts to proceed with their important work. The choice of a Moderator was immediately entered upon, and Law was placed in the Chair. The *Seafield Correspondence* contains the following reference to his election :—" Assembly, 1694, March 30. Mr Crichton, their former Moderator, preached. Mr John Law is chosen Moderator. Mr Rule, Mr Blair, and [an] old man called Hamilton (not any of the Hamiltons in Edinburgh), and Mr Patrick Simson were in the leet with him " (p. 132).

It need only be remarked in connection with the Assembly of 1694 over which Law presided, that it set itself deliberately to make arrangements in the most liberal way for the reception into the Church of ministers who had conformed to Prelacy. Though everything the king asked for was not granted, so much was conceded as to arouse the fears of many and the complaints of others that the foundations of the Presbyterian Church were being undermined. But it redounds to the credit of this Assembly, that it looked at the question of the needs of Scotland in no narrow, fanatical spirit, but was willing, if it could be honourably managed, to include in the service of the Church those ministers whose sympathies were evangelical, even though their views on ecclesiastical government were not in harmony with the prevailing opinion. The fact is that if this had not been done, wide districts in the north of Scotland would have been deprived of the ordinary public means of grace.

In 1695 Law, as retiring Moderator, preached at the opening of the new Assembly. His text was 1 Cor. iv. 2. " Moreover it is required in stewards that a man be found

faithful." If the choice of a text on such an occasion reveals the spirit and character of the preacher, Law may be regarded as an example of the truth he desired to set forth. Then, as it was found that many members had not yet come to town, it was unanimously resolved that Law should continue to act as Moderator for three days, after which he handed over the duties of the Chair to his successor.

The remaining events in Law's career are quickly told. He does not seem to have issued anything from the press. The only printed document which bears his name is the preface to *A plain and easy Explication of the Assemblies Shorter Catechism by the late Mr Thomas Hall, minister at Larne, 1697.* This preface, which had attached to it as well the names of Meldrum, Rule, and Anderson, was written in commendation of the book. Wodrow relates a conversation which took place between Law and Archbishop Leighton, probably when Law was wandering about in the neighbourhood of Dunblane. "Mr Law was in conversation with him, and somewhat fell in, which brought on the subject of charity, which the Bishop used to expatiate upon. Mr Law said he minded an expression of Mr David Dickson's, who used to say that 'people should not make a fool of their charity.' The Bishop replyed he did not know what Mr Dickson meaned in these words, but the Scripture made a fool of charity, since it said that fools bear all things and charity beareth all things"—a very light expression adds Wodrow with some bitterness. The meaning of the story is evidently this, that when Leighton pressed upon Law his policy of comprehension on an Episcopalian basis, Law replied that a project of that kind was simply foolishness disguising itself in the robes of charity (*Ana.* ii. 348).

In 1694 Law was asked to officiate at the marriage of Sir John Foulis of Colinton, who on the 27th March, makes the following entry in his *Account Book* :—"For a pair doe leather gloves w[t] a black ribbon and a pair shiverons for Mr John Law, the minister y[t] was to marie us, £3, 6. 0." Testimony to the courtesy and gentle bearing of Law is borne by Hepburn, who in his *Humble Pleadings* says he was "a person I owe and sincerely bear much kindness and deference unto, to whom I was under a sense of manifold obligations." On the 26th November 1707, Law, feeling the burden of the High Church becoming too heavy, resigned. No specimen of his preaching has come down to us. Even Elizabeth West

does not mention his name. In 1708 he was appointed almoner to Queen Anne. On his retirement from the work of the ministry, the Town Council, wishful to show their appreciation of his services, granted him " a thousand merks per annum."

Law died on the 26th December 1712, in the eightieth year of his age and the fifty-seventh of his ministry. His wife predeceased him. Their son, William, was one of the Regents of Edinburgh University from 1690 till 1708, when he was appointed Professor of Moral Philosophy. He founded the family of the Laws of Elvingston in East Lothian. It may also be noted that John Law of Lauriston, who became Comptroller of the Finances of France, was a distant connection of the old Moderator, who was present at his baptism on the 21st April 1671. The Riddells of Haddington, famed in the annals of law and archaeology, trace their descent from the quondam minister of the High Church. Law is buried in Greyfriars Churchyard, the records of which tell us that on the 3rd December 1703, there was granted " to John Law a piece of free ground, upon which he may either erect a monument or inclose upon the east wall of the churchyard, on the south side of the gate that leads to the Society Port." There William Law erected, as the custom was in those old days, an elaborate monument in memory of his father and mother. It bears the following Latin inscription now difficult to decipher :—

> Memoriae optimorum parentum, D. Joannis Law, ecclesiae apud Edinensis pastoris prudentissimi, vigilantissimi, purioris religionis studio, et pietate non fucata insignis ; et Isabellae Cunninghame, conjugis amantissimae, vera sanctitate et placidi ac sedati animi ornamento conspicuae ; qui mortalitatem exuerunt, ad immortalis vitae gaudia nitentes, ille 26 die Decembris, anno Dom. 1712. Aetatis suae 80. Haec 8 die Novembris, anno Dom. 1703. Aetatis suae 70. Hoc monumentum sacrum esse voluit Gulielmus Law, filius.

CHAPTER IV

PATRICK SIMSON, MODERATOR, 1695

Patrick Simson came of a good clerical stock. He was born on the 2nd October 1628, at New Abbey in Kirkcudbrightshire, where his father was minister. His grandfather was the well-known Patrick Simson of Stirling. By the death of his father, which took place before 1636, the home at New Abbey was broken up. Apparently his mother died about the same time. The memory of his great loss ever abode with him. Long afterwards in his *Spiritual Songs* he refers to it, when addressing God, in these words:—

> "My dearest Father, I was left to Thee
> When I became an orphan destitute;
> Who can conceive what Thou hast been to me?
> How well Thy way a Father's name did suit!

Though deprived at an early age of the moulding influences of his father's manse, Simson was extremely fortunate in the guardian under whose charge he was placed. He became an inmate of the house of his cousin, the famous George Gillespie, minister first at Wemyss and afterwards in Edinburgh. Under his care Simson remained, till the lamented death of his brilliant relative in 1648. His association with the most accomplished theologian of the day, who brought him up as a member of his own family, could not fail to be fraught with the highest advantage to the future minister. We cannot help regretting that he did not repay the debt he owed to Gillespie, by giving us a picture of the home life of his cousin, and recording some of his table-talk. When Gillespie, suffering from fatal illness, was taken to his native air in Kirkcaldy, Simson accompanied him. He stood by his dying bed and received his farewell benediction—"God bless you, and as you carry the name of your grandfather, so God grant you his graces."

Of Simson's student days we have no record, but soon after he received license he went to Inveraray Castle, to act as

chaplain to the Marquis of Argyll. Here he remained for four years. The two sons of the Marquis were attending the University of Glasgow at the time, but a number of daughters were at home, and possibly the chaplain had some management of their education. It fell to him, likewise, to conduct public worship in church every Thursday. The good fortune, which made him the intimate companion of Gillespie, did not forsake him during his stay in the west country, for he came into close and constant association with David Dickson, Professor of Divinity in Glasgow, who was then enjoying the hospitality of the Marquis. Gordon, the minister of Inveraray, tells us that "Mr David Dickson was two years with all his family at Inveraray," during which time "Dickson preached in the forenoon, Gordon in the afternoon, and Simson on Thursday." Dickson evidently took to the youthful chaplain, and employed him as his amanuensis. He dictated to him "a short commentary on all Isaiah, which," says James Stirling of the Barony Church, "I have seen and heard" (Wodrow, *Ana.* iii. 12). This commentary seems never to have been printed, but Simson's name is associated with Dickson's in the publication of the standard document *The Sum of Saving Knowledge.* According to the tradition preserved by Wodrow, Dickson, anxious to draw up a simpler form of faith than the Catechism, discussed the subject from time to time with his friend and old student, James Durham, as they walked together over the Craigs of Glasgow. Simson, freed from his duties at Inveraray for the nonce, accompanied them on their afternoon strolls, and wrote out their conclusions. Dickson, returning again to the Marquis' protection, preached to the worshippers from the castle and village, the substance of his forthcoming treatise. At the request of the Marchioness, the sermons were partially written out, and judging from his previous practice, Dickson would be sure to make use of Simson as his penman. Experience of this kind was most helpful to the young expectant, thrown thus into such close connection with an honoured leader of the Church.

During his chaplaincy in Argyllshire, Simson paid a visit to Edinburgh in May 1650, when though only twenty-two years of age, he was present at the conference held by certain ministers with the Marquis of Montrose, the day before his death. "This same time," says Wodrow, on the 29th September 1710, "Mr Patrick Simson told me that

he was allowed to go with the ministers that went into conference with the Marquis of Montrose, the day before his death, and was present at the time of their conference. His memory is so good, that although it is now sixty years ago and more since it was, I can entirely depend upon his relation, even as to the very words, and I set it down here as I wrote it from his mouth, and read it over to him" (Napier's *Montrose and the Covenanters*, ii. 536). No one would listen more eagerly to the account of the interview than Simson's patron, Argyll, who in the fall of his great antagonist, may have seen foreshadowed his own tragic end. Argyll himself was in Edinburgh at the time, and only a few days before, screened from view by the blinds of Moray House, had watched Montrose being brought into the capital, a prisoner in the hangman's cart. Possibly Simson was at Scone, on the occasion of the coronation of Charles II., on the 1st January 1651, when Argyll put the crown on the royal brow. But by the middle of the year Argyll, who had been Scotland's dictator, fell from power, and retired to his castle at Inveraray. In a news-letter dated the 2nd March 1652, a glimpse is given to us of the Marquis and his chaplain, though by this time Simson may no longer have held that office. The Marquis it says, "hath noe souldiery about his house at Innerara, nor any show of leavying an army, his chaplin usually prayes for the king under the notion of a distressed prince" (Willcock's *Great Marquess*, 279).

Favoured possibly by the friendship of Dickson, who had now gone to Edinburgh, Simson, after being proposed for a church in Glasgow, received a call in 1653 to the parish of Renfrew, and here in due course he was ordained on the 10th November. It is interesting to note, as James Stirling tells us, that Simson was "an eye-witness of six General Assemblies before he was a minister himself" (Wodrow, *Ana.* iii. 115). This doubtless gave him that knowledge of church business, which marked him all through his career. Of the early part of his ministry in Renfrew, hardly a trace seems to remain. One personal touch is given us in the *Diary* of Alexander Brodie, who on the 23rd August 1655, visited Renfrew. "Here," he writes, "I desired to be humble in spirit. Mr Pat. Simson preached 26 Isaiah 7, 8, 9, and lectured on Amos 6. Many profitable instructions had we." As Brodie was an experienced sermon taster, his commenda-

tion of Simson's pulpit appearances is a sufficient guarantee of their character.

We meet with no other reference to Simson till 1661, a dark year for faithful Presbyterians. His old patron, Argyll, had been sentenced to death. He lay in his cell in Edinburgh. The Marquis sent word to his friends in the west to pray for him on the day of his execution. Simson was not unmindful of the request. It was in May, the Monday of the communion at Inchinnan. Simson was taking the service. Into his soul, as he thought of Argyll, were borne the words of Christ—"My son, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee." Over and over again the minister repeated them, as if he were speaking in the very presence of his friend. How this special word of cheer came into his mind we cannot say, but it is remarkable that at the very time, John Carstares was visiting the Marquis in his prison and made use of the same comforting exhortation. Argyll spoke of it as "the sealing of his charter." Two days after, on the 29th May, the king's birthday fell. Simson was urged to keep it in accordance with the royal wish. "When I keep Christ's birthday, I shall think of keeping the king's birthday," was the bold reply. For his non-observance of Charles' natal day, a fine was imposed upon him. The vigour of his answer showed that when evil times drew nigh, Simson would not go down before the storm. He had not long to wait. On the 1st October 1662, he was deprived of his living, and for the next ten years silence envelops his name. Of his experiences we know nothing till in 1672 the second Act of Indulgence came into force. Its terms Simson accepted, and on the 3rd September he was sent to minister in the parish of Kilmacolm in the Presbytery of Greenock, some ten miles distant from his old home. His settlement in Kilmacolm brings him into view once more, and we are able to note certain incidents in his career.

The Minutes of the Presbytery of Greenock do not contain any reference to Simson during the years he remained within its bounds. Yet he said himself about his work during the Indulgence, that "he had the greatest liberty in preaching, and as much success the years he was indulged there, that ever he had in his ministry" (Wodrow, *Ana.* ii. 32). The terms of the Indulgence, however, were too strict for a man like Simsom to keep within them, and from time

to time he broke through them. How he reconciled his action with the bond he took may be a little difficult to explain, but he was willing to run the risk of suffering for his disobedience at the hands of the Privy Council. By the act to which he submitted, he was prohibited from preaching outside the parish to which he was confined, or from administering the sacraments to any except his own parishioners. Possibly his nearness to his old people constrained Simson to step beyond the limits of the civil enactment. At any rate, we find him in 1674 accused of preaching and administering the sacraments beyond the limits of Kilmacolm. Matters became more serious in 1678, when in November he was cited before the Privy Council for continued contravention of the Act of Indulgence. He did not appear. Next February he was summoned again, and upon his refusal to comply, the Council denounced him as a rebel. On the 14th May 1679, they took formal steps to carry their denunciation into effect. "The Lords of his Majesty's Privy Council considering," we are told, "that Mr Patrick Simson, indulged minister at Kilmacolm, was cited to compear before them in February last, to answer for breach of confinement, and keeping of conventicles; and whereas he hath not appeared and has been declared rebel, they declare the kirk of Kilmacolm vacant, and ordain the solicitor to acquaint the parishioners that they pay him no more stipend." "What was the occasion of this severity," says Wodrow, "I know not. Afterwards he had, upon better information given, some favour shown him." This favour was of a generous character, for Simson "continued several years after this in the peaceable exercise of his ministry" in Kilmacolm (*Hist.* iii., 5, 61).

The *Diary* of William Cunningham of Craigends, who was a heritor in Kilmacolm, reveals to us the kind of relationship which existed between him and his minister. Two entries in it run as follows:—"November 17, 1674. To Mr Patrick Simson, min[r] at Kilmacolme for 4 bolls 1 firlot teind meill, being the last half of Dennestoun teind for cropt 1673, (my tennent having payd the other half) the said meill being compted at 7 lb. the boll and 4 lb. of vicarage, £33, 15. 0. *Nota.* The feir was much lesse, but I did not stand with the minister." "September 6, 1675. To Mr Patrick Simson, min[r] of Kilmacolme for 4 bolls 1 firlot meill, said meill being compted at 14 M. the boll and 4 lb. of vicarage,

£43, 13. 4." It was certainly generous of Cunningham not "to stand with the minister," but evidently there was some friction between them. This may be gathered from the third entry, dated 6th September 1676, which states—"I payed Mr Patrick Simson for six bolls of the teind 1675, and 4 lb. of vicarage. *Nota.* Though the meill be fallen exceeding cheap now, that Ja: Shaw to buy my girnald in bulk will give me no more than 4 lb. 6s. 8d. the boll, and a boll to the score, yet I payed Mr Patrick all his at 10 M. to the boll, he refusing to take meill, and was scarce content of that price either; the Candlemas Feir, he said, being 7 lb. 10s., and that the least he took from any was 7 lb., but I thought him very well payed at 10 M., it being more than I designed, never doubting but he would be pleased with the price as it presently sold, if he would not take the meill, for I well remember the Feir was not always his rule."

Cunningham and his father were strong supporters of the Covenant, and in 1684 were fined £6000 stg. for their sympathy with the proscribed religion.

Simson was acquainted with Peden, and during the Prophet's imprisonment in the Bass Rock, corresponded with him and sent him money. Simson's interest in him and his ability to communicate with him, allow us to see some of the conditions under which the prisoners of the Bass were confined. Possibly the minister of Kilmacolm had his sympathy drawn out towards the sufferers on the precipitous, windswept Rock, by the fact that Robert, one of George Gillespie's sons with whom he had been brought up, was confined there by the Privy Council, part of his imprisonment being contemporaneous with that of Peden. Another link of connection between the two correspondents is suggested by the circumstance, that the maiden name of Simson's wife was Peden. It is accordingly just possible that the minister of Kilmacolm was related by marriage to the brave old Covenanter. Simson's letter to him has not survived, but Peden's reply has reached us. The relevant portion of it may be quoted:—

"Rev. and Dear Brother,—Saluting you heartily in the Lord, whose you are and whom you serve, love yea, conscience to duty maketh me run the hazard thus to bless you with the brethren there, for your sympathy and continued earnest care, especially towards me unworthy of

bonds and most unworthy to be remembered in bonds . . . I return to thank you for your seasonable supply, an evidence of your love to Him and your affectionate remembrance of us . . . Persuade yourself you are in our remembrance though not so deep as we in yours. Yet making mention of you to your and our Master, begging you may be directed, supported and carried through cleanly, in this our hour of temptation; acquitting yourselves as watchmen indeed from your watch-tower, fulfilling your ministry which you have received from the Lord . . . So prayeth your unworthy and affectionate well-wisher in bonds.

"Alexander Peden"

The date of this letter is the 11th August 1677. It displays a very high regard on the part of the Prophet of the Covenant for his friend and sympathizer in Kilmacolm. It would be interesting to know more of the relationship between the two men. Further search among the documents of the period may yet add a new chapter to the biography of Peden.

Once more for a lengthened period, Simson disappears from view, and we do not catch sight of him again till the Indulgence of 1687 enabled him to take up his work afresh in his old parish of Renfrew, The church, however, was shut against him, the curate, Francis Ross, still preaching in it and likewise occupying the manse, till both buildings were handed over to Simson by Act of Parliament, on the 25th April 1690. Meantime, the people gathered together in a temporary place of worship, and the work and discipline of the parish were carried on in much the same way as before. About this time, Simson's fame as a preacher gained for him two calls, one to Stirling, in September 1688, and the other to Glasgow, in May 1690, but he preferred to remain in Renfrew. His call to Glasgow went by appeal from the Presbytery to the Synod, at which a long debate took place on the question of his translation. The Synod decided to keep him in his old charge. The *Records of the Burgh of Glasgow* reveal the great desire of the Town Council to have Simson in their midst as one of the city ministers. On the 1st February 1690, we read, that by a plurality of votes they called Simson to one of the churches under their control. On the 7th June, they sent a commission to the Synod at Irvine to prosecute the call. On the 5th

September, they took the additional step of appointing two of their number to go to Renfrew, and "entreat" him to accept the call. The last stage of their proceedings is a sure index of their eagerness to secure the services of Simson for Glasgow. When they could not tempt him to leave his country charge, they showed their respect for him by conferring upon him the dignity of a burgess. On the 13th April 1691, they appointed "the dean of gild to admitt and receave the Rev. Mr Patrick Simson, minister of the gospel at Renfrew, burgess and gild brother of this burgh, as he who married Jonnet Peadie, lawful daughter to umquhile James Peadie, merchand, burgess and gild brother of the said burgh, notwithstanding she was married to ane former husband, in respect any children of that marriage are now deceased and had no benefit thereby, and to remitt his fynes to him and hold the samen as paid, though being but small" (*Extracts from the Records of the Burgh of Glasgow*, p. 10).

The influential position which Simson had now reached in the councils of the Church, is shown by the part he took in the conferences held in Edinburgh, in connection with the re-establishment of Presbyterianism. At one of the General Meetings he occupied the chair, and at the opening of the Assembly of 1690, he was chosen to be one of the preachers. Principal Rule tells us that on that occasion, his sermon was "a solid, pertinent and useful discourse." Recognition of his scholarly attainments likewise came to him, in his appointment as Dean of Faculties in the University of Glasgow. This was an annual appointment, and Simson was constantly re-elected during the whole of Principal Dunlop's tenure of office, from 1690 to 1701. The *Munimenta of the University* contains the following reference to the office of Dean. "Act of Senate, 11th December 1690, ordered that a grave, decent gown be made for the Deans of Faculty of this University, to be kept peculiarly for them to wear on solemn occasions." There seems to have been a long-standing connection between the University of Glasgow and the Renfrew Church, the salary of whose precentor came in part from the academic funds. Thus we read also in the *Munimenta*:—"1691, June 3, The Faculty considering that the soum of twenty pounds Scots used to be payed yearly to the precentor of the parish of Renfrew in former times, order it to be payed out of the revenues of

the University in time coming." As this enactment was made soon after Simson entered upon the duties of his office, we may conclude that the new dean was very zealous in looking after the rights of his people. His resignation of his high position was quite voluntary. He refused to accept further nomination. Probably his age, for he was then seventy-three years old, made him wish to be free from the work involved. So it is recorded under date the 22nd September 1701, that "The Dean of Faculties' place is vacant. Mr Patrick Simson, who had been all Mr Dunlop's time in it, refusing to serve any longer." The letter in which he demitted office is preserved in the *Stirling MSS.* in the University. His signature is interesting and determines the spelling of his name. He signs himself—"Pa. Simson."

The great honour of his life came to him when he was raised to the Chair of the General Assembly in 1695. That Assembly met on the 17th December, under the presidency of John Law. For some reason, many of the members had not reached Edinburgh in time for the opening ceremonies. Accordingly the appointment of a new Moderator was delayed for three days. The choice fell upon Simson, who was now in the forty-second year of his ministry. The Assembly, which continued to sit till the 4th January 1696, was chiefly occupied with matters affecting the efficiency of the Church, and Simson proved himself most competent in guiding the discussions. One important object, long aimed at by the Church, bulked largely in the eyes of the Assembly, and to their joy it was speedily realized by Act of Parliament. This was the establishment of a school in every parish throughout Scotland, supported in such measure out of public funds, as to bring education within the reach of the poorest in the community. It is the glory of the Scottish Church, that it alone of all Churches in Christendom had the genius to set this ideal in front of it. How great the debt is, which Scotland owes to the statesmanlike grasp of the case taken by ministers and elders, can never be fully calculated. It is part of Simson's record that the Church achieved its aim during his year of office.

In the question of union between England and Scotland, Simson took a special interest. He was not able to attend the conferences held in Edinburgh on the matter, but it fell to him to send reports from the Presbytery to be laid

before the committee. "His letters," says a writer in the *Christian Instructor* for 1826, "afford a most admirable display of the strong sense, enlarged views, moderation and piety of that eminent individual. He saw and lamented deeply the decay of piety and public spirit, and he concludes one of his letters in the following characteristic manner—Ah! for more public spiritedness! and that poor *I* had ability conform to my will, to take a lift with my brethren, who are bearing the burden and heat of the day. . . . Our chief work must be at the throne of grace; and much grace and divine assistance be with you all in your work. If He be found with us, he can soon wonderfully change the face of affairs. Remember your own old, crazy, feckless, yet affectionate brother, P. S."

Simson also, it is sad to tell, took his full share in connection with the detection of witches and the exorcising of the bewitched. The local ecclesiastical records have frequent reference to his diligence in this respect. Renfrewshire was greatly oppressed with persons in league with the powers of evil. So it was believed at least, and it behoved the clerical and civil authorities to stamp out the epidemic with the utmost rigour. The case of Catherine Shaw, daughter of John Shaw, laird of Bargarran, is well-known. It is told at length in *The True Narrative of the Sufferings and Relief of a Young Girl.* Various ministers were called in to deal with her, Simson among the number. The date was 1697. It is recorded that "upon January 12, it being the turn of Mr Patrick Simson to be there . . . after he came to the house [Bargannan], he found her under some lesser fits, which came and went off quickly, and when prayer began she was quiet and sober during the same, but in time of singing the 93rd Psalm, she fell into a sore fit, . . . after her recovery from which, she was quiet and composed all the time of prayer, and while the minister lectured on Mark ix. from 14 to 30 verses, was very attentive." The 11th February was appointed by the Presbytery as a fast-day in the parish of Erskine, within which Bargannan was situated, when special religious services were held. Three sermons were delivered, the last being preached by Simson from Matthew xvii. 20 and 21. Catherine Shaw was in church all the time. "At six at night, Mr Simson with his wife and others conferred about her." The case need not be further followed. It may only

be mentioned that Catherine, who was probably just highly hysterical, afterwards became the wife of John Miller, minister of Kilmaurs, and earned for herself a good degree, through being the means of introducing the spinning and manufacture of linen into the West of Scotland.

Other cases of a similar kind occupied the attention of the Renfrew minister. On the 21st May 1697, he signed an attestation that John Reid, smith in Inchinnan, had confessed to trafficking with witches, and had been at their meetings. Reid suffered the penalty of death. The witches with whom Reid associated had been condemned to the stake a few days before. The Presbytery appointed certain of their number to give spiritual counsel to the unfortunate wretches. The minutes testify that on "May 19, 1697, Mr Pa. Simson and Mr Da. Brown are appointed to have each of them a lecture in the tolbooth to those that are condemned, upon June 9th, the day preceding their execution." In fulfilment of this injunction it is recorded:—"At Paisley, June 9, 1697, Mr Simson preacht this day in the tolbooth to the condemned persons on II. Tim. ii. 25–26, and also Mr Brown on I. Tim. i. 16, according to appointment." It is further stated that "the Presbytery did appoint the whole members to spend some time this night, with the condemned persons who are to die to-morrow, and did allot to each one or two of the brethren, one of the sentenced persons [there were seven of them] to be dealt with by them, and waited upon to the fire." One shudders at the whole business, but clearly the pains the Presbytery took can only be explained by the fact that the ministers were sincere in following what they believed to be the will of God.

In connection with the attitude of the Church towards this subject, it is not out of place to quote the opinion of Kirkpatrick Sharpe in his notes to Law's *Memorialls.* "With all the compassion," he says, "which the fate of so many unfortunate victims is calculated to excite, it ought not to be forgotten, that many of these persons made a boast of their supposed art, in order to intimidate and extort from their neighbours whatever they desired; that they were frequently of an abandoned life, addicted to horrible oaths and imprecations; and in several cases, *venders of downright poison*, by which they gratified their customers, in their *darkest purposes of avarice or revenge*" (p. cvii.) Such a well-balanced judgment may very fairly

be set over against a great deal of a different kind, written by Kirkpatrick Sharpe himself and other virulent detractors of the Presbyterian Church.

Simson celebrated his jubilee as a minister in 1703. In memory of it, the Session presented to the Renfrew Church four silver communion cups bearing the following inscription in Latin :—*Pro Eccl. Renfroana Sumpti : Consistorii Mro P : Simson Past :* 1703 *ann : aetat :* 75 *ministerii* 50. These cups are still in use, and form the one visible link of connection between him and the present generation of communicants.

Years were now beginning to tell on Simson's physical strength. He was a good way past the three-score years and ten. Blindness, too, was coming upon him. How far his infirmities interfered with his pulpit work we cannot say. He may have had assistance given to him, but he remained sole minister of Renfrew till his death. In 1710, we find him presiding at the communion. Private work he was able to carry on, and his mental faculties were in no way impaired. He was endowed with most remarkable powers of memory. Wodrow, who was on most familiar terms with him, was in the habit of visiting him and drawing upon his large stores of information about bygone times. He gives the following striking instance of the retentiveness of his memory. The date is the 8th September 1707. "This account," he says, "of George Gillespie was dictated to me by Mr Patrick Simson, Mr Gillespie's cousin, who was with him in his last sickness and at his death, and took minutes at the time of these his expressions. I read it over to him. He corrected some words, and then said : This is all I mind of his expressions towards the close. They made some impression on me at the time and then I set them down. I have not read the paper that I mind these forty years, but I am positive these were his very words." A day or two after, Wodrow was helping him to look for another paper, for "now he had almost lost his sight," and his original notes were stumbled upon. When compared, the two copies were exactly alike, "save for an inconsiderable word or two, . . . which is an instance of a strong memory, the greatest ever I knew" (*Ana.* i. 158). Simson's grandson, Patrick Paisley, minister in Kilmarnock, told Wodrow that he was staying with his grandfather a little more than a year before his death. During the night in his sleep, his wife heard him

give out a text, John xiv. 2-3, "and [he] had a sermon upon it more affecting and ravishing than ever she heard." She had the intention of calling others in the house to listen, but was afraid she would awaken him. He was then in his eighty-fourth year. It is further recorded "that a day or two before his death, the last chapter he heard read in his ordinary, was in Judges, about the division of the land of Canaan, and he would correct the least mistake in the Hebrew words" (*Ana.* ii. 389). Surely there were giants in Biblical scholarship in those olden days!

In 1712, Simson saw his way to take the Oath of Abjuration, but he was not able to do so in public, owing to his weak health. He sent a letter of excuse to the Justices, who appointed two of their number to visit him and obtain his signature. "Old Mr Simson," we are told, "qualified in his chamber; though it's scarce to be supposed he can ever be in his pulpit again" (Wodrow, *Corr.* i. 339). When he was unable to attend the meetings of Presbytery, his brethren showed their affection for him by appointing one or two of their number to wait upon him and inform him of their proceedings. On the 20th January 1713, his old friend from Eastwood visited him, and was told by him that "his work now is to goe through the Scripture exercises of dying saints, and endeavour to bring himself up to them." In the following January Wodrow wrote:—"There are only two antediluvian ministers alive in all the Church of Scotland; Mr Patrick Simson, minister at Renfrew, and Mr Thomas Warner, minister at Balmaclellan, and both these are turned very crazy and cannot live many months. So great a change doe forty or fifty years, in any age, make" (*Ana.* ii. 276). The end came in October 1715. "This day, October 24," to quote once more from the *Analecta*, "dyed the Reverend Mr Patrick Simson, minister at Renfrew, aged as I hear eighty-eight, and sixty-two years in the ministry. I have now had long acquaintance with him and never knew one more pleasant and profitable in conversation, [nor] of a sweeter temper than he was. He had one of the clearest judgments and yet the most exact and tenacious memorys that ever I knew. He was the most digested and distinct master of Scripture that I ever met with" (ii. 305). At his death he was the Father of the Church of Scotland.

Simson had two sons, both of whom were in the ministry—John, who was settled at Troqueer and then translated to

the Chair of Divinity in Glasgow, where he became famous in connection with the heresy case which bears his name, and Matthew, minister of Pencaitland. Both John and Matthew studied theology at Leyden. Of his two daughters, Agnes married her relation, John Simson of Kirktonhall, in West Kilbride, a Glasgow merchant. She had a family of seventeen sons. Anna became the wife of John Paisley, minister of Lochwinnoch. Of Mrs Simson we know little beyond her name. She died a year before her husband, in September 1714. Simson must have been a man of considerable means. At any rate, he put £100 into the disastrous Darien Scheme, and his son, Professor Simson, held a farm in Renfrew parish, which he doubtless inherited from his father. A number of his more remote descendants, Simsons and Paisleys, entered the ministry. Sir John Moore of Corunna was a great-grandson of the minister of Renfrew, his mother being a daughter of the Glasgow Professor.

There remain still to be mentioned the literary productions of Simson. A brief paper which he drew up in 1709, on the scope of the act of 1690 relating to the calling of ministers, specially prepared for the use of Wodrow and Paisley of Lochwinnoch at a Synod meeting, is interesting from the reference it makes to the *Miscellanies* of his early guardian, George Gillespie. It shows, too, how at the age of eighty-one, his mental faculties were quite acute, so that he could state with ease and clearness the legal position of heritors and elders, in connection with the calling of a minister. His sympathies with the right of church members to elect their own spiritual teachers are strongly expressed. He takes high ground when he contends that a call given only by heritors and elders was "a very scrimp and insufficient call to the conscience of a person called, if he were tender and did value his own comfort and the success of his ministry." The document which he wished to remain anonymous, together with its covering letter to Wodrow, is printed in the *Christian Instructor* of 1828. The only trace of old age in the paper is to be seen in the remarkable length of the sentences. One sentence contains 349 words.

Simson seems to have been specially interested in a brochure issued by the notorious Archbishop Paterson, and entitled *Hackston's Ghost.* It was common for the opponents of the Covenant to refer to the martyrs in this way. A brief account of the document in question, a copy of which is

preserved among the *Wodrow MSS.* in the Advocates' Library, may be given. It purports to emanate from the sturdy Covenanter, Hackston of Rathillet after his death, and endeavours in a most specious way, to show that consistency on the part of the moderate Presbyterians should cause them to withdraw from the position they held, join the Cameronians in their support of the Sanquhar Declaration, and disown Charles II. for perjury. "If," it says, "a non-covenanting King [Charles I.] shall ly in prison, what shall be done to a perjured king, of whom there is no hope and who can give no security for the future, having broken all tyes which use to bind men? And therefore," it concludes, "you must either renounce presbytery and your covenants, or you must own us, our declaration and covenant." The brochure is not long, extending to little more than two pages. Evidently its appearance caused a good deal of stir. From the excitement it provoked, it is likely that it passed through the press, but no printed copy seems to have survived. Simson undertook to reply to it. In the *Wodrow MSS.*, *Hackston's Ghost* is followed by *Some few brief Remarks on a Paper called Hackston's Ghost*, and in all probability, for no name is attached to it, this is the answer which came from Simson's pen. He charges the author with being "a prelate in a Cameronian mask," and with "misrepresenting matters of fact." To one misrepresentation he calls special attention. The prelate had said in effect—"You disowned Charles I., you ought also to disown Charles II." Simson simply replied—"We did not disown Charles I., and therefore very well may we adhere to presbyteries and our covenants."

To this reply of Simson, the well-known Sir James Turner, whose name, though he was a Scottish minister's son, was almost as offensive to the Presbyterians as that of Claverhouse, made answer, endeavouring to draw the moderate Covenanters into the extreme position of openly opposing the King. Sir James' treatise I have not been able to discover. Simson again entered the lists, and boldly attacked his military antagonist in a paper, likewise preserved in the same volume of the *Wodrow MSS.*, and to which Scott's *Fasti* evidently refers under the name of *The Larger Reply.* In the *MS.*, however, it bears the title of *A Vindication of true Presbyterians from the Aspertions cast upon them in a malicious paper called Hackston's Ghost.* Possibly there may

be some difficulty in determining whether these are indeed the documents which Simson sent forth. The fact, however, is certain, that two papers on the subject were issued by him. Wodrow's testimony is conclusive on the point. Mr Simson told him, he records, that "Hackston's Ghost was writt by Bishop Paterson. The letter in answer by Mr S[imson]. The Reply by Sir James Turner, the larger Reply by Mr S." (*Ana.* i. 324).

In the same collection of *MSS.*, there is a lengthy treatise bearing the title—*An occasional Enquiry into the present case, concerning the hearing, receiving ordinances from and subjecting to the ministry of Conformists.* No indication is given in the text of the name of the author, but a note at the end tells us it was "penned April 1683." In the index to the volume (xvi. 4to), it is mentioned that the treatise was written "by Mr P. S." This can hardly be any one else than the minister of Renfrew. He was an indulged minister, in all probability at Kilmacolm at the time, though a curate was likewise in possession of the parish. Wodrow also frequently refers to him by his initials, so that with a good deal of certainty we may refer this document to his pen. On the burning question on which he writes, the author's conclusion is clear :—"We may lawfully, and without sin, joyn in worship with Comforme ministers."

But the great literary work to which Simson devoted himself was his *Spiritual Songs.* As these were published in 1685-86, we may suppose that during his years of enforced seclusion from the work of the ministry he occupied himself with producing them. Previous to 1685 he issued a versified edition of the Song of Solomon, to which a few other Scripture Songs were added, but this volume seems to have disappeared entirely. The full title of his book is—*Spiritual Songs or Holy Poems. A garden of true delight, containing all the Scripture Songs that are not in the Book of Psalms, together with several sweet Prophetical and Evangelical Scriptures, meet to be composed into Songs. Translated into English meeter and fitted to be sung with any of the common tunes of the Psalms. Done at first for the Author's own Recreation ; but since published (before in part, and now more compleat), to be as a Supplement to the Book of Psalms, out of the same rich Storehouse, a further Help to the Spiritual Solace of his Christian friends, and digested into Six Books, according to the Order and Distinction of the Books of Scripture, out of which they are*

taken . . . anno Dom. 1685. The six books occupy 256 pages.

Though Simson tells us that he drew up these *Songs* for his own amusement, he may have known of a desire which, though not general throughout the Church, had certainly begun to make itself felt. This was to have in public worship as supplementary to the Psalms, songs based on Scripture. Whether Simson's effort strengthened this desire we cannot tell, but in 1688, while events were hurrying towards the Revolution, the synod of Glasgow and Ayr took up the question. Their action is set forth in the following minutes:—"Paisley, 3 April, 1688. Reported by the Moderator that the Scripture Songs translated and composed by the Reverend Mr Patrick Simson, being now printed, in order to their being dispersed, each brother take one coppie for himself, and recommend the said books to all well affected gentlemen and others of their acquaintance; and for that end the clerk of Synod send several coppies of the said books to the Moderators of the respective presbitries, with a letter of advice anent their price and number, that accordingly the money thereof may be duly returned to the persons, givers out of the said books. The Synod approves of the overture and appoints it to have the force of a synodical act." "Glasgow, July 3, 1688. The Committee [of Synod] considering the Synod's act anent the Scripture Songs, recommends to every Presbytery within the bounds of this Synod, that the brethren thereof in their particular sessions, desire their particular elderships to take some of them, and also that these elders distribute them to those of their acquaintance they can prevail with, to take ane of them, the price being ten shillings Scotts each coppie." "Glasgow, 2 October, 1688. The Synod, considering that the General Meeting at Edinburgh had so far noticed the Scriptural Songs translated into meeter by the Reverend Mr Patrick Simson, as to order their revisal by [a committee] that so they might be fitter for private use; orders and appoints that each brother take a dozen several coppies, that he may spread them among his acquaintance or others he can prevail with to take them at eightpence [stg.] the coppie."

These minutes seem to show that Simson had printed at his own expense a very large edition of his *Songs*. The insistence of the Synod that the elders within their bounds

should take copies for themselves and their friends, and that each minister should invest in twelve copies, is both amusing and pathetic. By and by the whole Church became interested in the matter. As early as the Assembly of 1695, when Simson himself was in the Chair, a motion was carried by which it was remitted to the Commission, "to cause revise the Scripture Songs." What was done in the immediate future is not known, as the Assembly records for the period are not extant; but on the 10th April 1705, the Assembly recommended it again to their Commission "to revise the book called Scripture Songs, in order to be prepared for public use, and report to next Assembly." Two committees were appointed by the Commission, one for the east of Scotland and the other for the west. On the Eastern Committee appear the names of Carstares, Meldrum, Blair and Law. The Commission specially invited Grierson of Wemyss to act along with them. Among the members of the Western Committee were Patrick Simson and Principal Stirling.

On the 2nd April 1706, the Committees reported to the Commission that the Glasgow Committee had made "several very pertinent amendments on the cadence and measure of the verses," and recommended that "the whole of the above written songs" be put "into the hands of some fit person that has skill of poecie, to amend any faults that may be found in the meeter." On the 8th April, the General Assembly which had just met, "recommend it to the several Presbyteries of this Church, to endeavour to promote the use of these Songs, in private families within their bounds," and also "to buy up copies of the said Songs that are printed, and to make suggestions for the improvement of the Songs." Very few Presbyteries attended to this recommendation. In 1708 the Assembly empowered their Commission to consider the printed version of the Songs with all amendments proposed, and to publish it for "the publick use of the Church," and "seeing there are many copies of the said version lying on the author's hand, it is recommended to ministers and others to buy the same for their private use in the meantime." The Commission met on the 12th July, but did not feel able to implement the Assembly's orders. They asked Synods to "nominate some of their number best acquainted with the original languages and knowen in poesie," to consider the matter and attend the Commission

in December. When the commission met in December, it was found that the Synods had taken no steps to help them. At the next meeting of commission in March 1709, the Presbyteries of Ross and Kirkcudbright sent up remarks and amendments, but the commission did not deem this expression of interest sufficient to warrant them to go on. As no further reference to the *Songs* occurs in the Assembly Records, the matter must have been allowed to drop.

The fact that many copies were still lying in the author's hands shows that Simson's experience was not altogether dissimilar from that of many another author past and present. Whether the public took up the work does not appear, but it is interesting to note that a new edition of the *Spiritual Songs* was published in Edinburgh in 1706, and another in Aberdeen in 1757. Two specimens of the Songs may be given. The first is based on Deut. xxxii. 26-29.

I

"None is like to Jeshurun's God,
Who rides on heavens hy,
And on the sky rides for thy help
In His excellency.
Th' Eternal God is thy refuge,
And underneath thee be
The everlasting arms which are
A strong support to thee.

II

And from before thy face He shall
The enemy thrust out,
And by His powerful word shall say,
Destroy and rout them out.
Then Isra'l safe shall dwell alone,
And Jacob's seed shall view
A land well stored with corn and wine,
His heavens shall drop down dew.

III

Happy art thou, O Israel,
Who can compared be
To thee, O people, sith the Lord
A Saviour is to thee,
Who is thy shield of help, the sword
Of thy excellency;
Thy foes shall crouch, and thou shalt tread
Upon their places hy.

The second is David's Lamentation over Jonathan (2 Sam. i. 17-19).

I

The ornament of Israel
Hath got a deadly blow
On thy high-places. Oh how are
The mighty faln to ground.
O tell not in the heathnish town
Of Gath these tidings sad,
And in the streets of Ashkelon
No news of this be made.

II

Lest daughters of the Philistines
Too much their mirth express,
Lest daughters of th' uncircumcised
Should leap for joyfulness.
Gilboa's mountains, let no dew
Nor rain upon you fall,
And let no fields of offerings
Upon you be at all.

III

The shields of mighty men were there
Cast vilely by for spoil;
The shield of Saul, as he had not
Anointed been with oyl.
The bow of Jonathan from blood
And fat of stout men slain,
Was not turned back; the sword of Saul
Returned not in vain.

IV

Lovely and pleasant in their lives
Were Jonathan and Saul,
And to their end they parted not,
One death did them befall;
In swiftness eagles and in strength
They lyons did excell,
Weep over Saul, O daughters ye,
That are of Israel.

V

Who caused you scarlet wear and things
Delightful to behold,
And did on your apparel put
Rich ornaments of gold.
How are the mighty faln amidst
The battel shamefully!
O Jonathan, thou wast thrust through
Upon thy places hy.

VI

My brother Jonathan, I am
Distressed sore for thee;
Thou hast been very amiable
And pleasant unto me.
Thy wondrous love to me did pass
The love of women far.
How are the mighty faln, how lost
Are the instruments of war.

After reading these lines, we can hardly wonder that the Assembly thought it a good thing to have the advice of a "fit person who had skill in poesy." Simson was a scholar, but he did not possess the divine art. If challenged, he would doubtless have said with Cotton Mather—"I designed rather pietie than poetrie in these lines." But the failure of his *Songs* to make a way for themselves in the Psalmody of the Church, must have proved anything but a "garden of delight" for him to walk in.

Simson was a man greatly revered. His brethren in the ministry paid profound respect to him. He was most catholic in his sympathies. During his ministry, the Lord's Prayer was not commonly used in Presbyterian worship. At his communion in June 1710, we are told that, "after the tables were over, he fell a-discoursing and gave some directions; and advising them to be much in prayer, commended the Lord's Prayer and concluded, they say, with it." Wodrow interviewed the old man on the point, when he replied that he wished by the use of the prayer common to the whole Church, "to testify his communion with the whole Christian Church, by the public use of the Lord's Prayer; that he was now eighty-two years, and many of the young ministers might have it to say that they never heard this prayer made use of by the old men, and make this a further excuse for the total disuse of it; which he thought was a fault, though he was against the abuse of it" (*Ana.* i. 296). He was also a firm believer in the wisdom and authority of the Church, from whose orders no departure ought to be allowed. Soon after the Revolution, his son-in-law, John Paisley of Lochwinnoch, was appointed by the Assembly to go to Aberdeen. He refused to obey the sentence of the Church. Simson said that "he knew none that disobeyed the ultimate sentence of the Church, but Providence pled controversies with them before they went off the world." Wodrow sums up his impression of his old friend in one pregnant phrase—"that excellent person, Mr Patrick Simson."

CHAPTER V

GEORGE MELDRUM, MODERATOR, 1698 AND 1703

George Meldrum was one of the most prominent ministers in the Church of the Revolution. He was the fourth son of Andrew Meldrum, dyer and bailie in Aberdeen, who claimed connection with the Meldrums of that ilk. At a very early age, George proceeded to Marischal College in his native city, and completed a most distinguished career by taking the degree of M.A. So scholarly were his attainments, that he was appointed Regent of Philosophy in his Alma Mater, when only sixteen years of age. This surely stands as an unbeaten record in the annals of academic work. His fame is further indicated by the fact that on ten different occasions he was appointed to the office of Rector. The date of his birth is 1634. When twenty years old, he possessed a bursary of £7, 10s. as a student of divinity. One other member of the family entered the Church—William, who became minister of the Tolbooth Parish in Edinburgh, and died in 1684.

Meldrum's abilities speedily gained for him a settled place in the ranks of the ministry. On the 2nd February 1659, he was ordained to the second charge in Aberdeen, where for a short time he had as his senior colleague, the well-known Andrew Cant. The appointment was given to him by the Town Council, who were patrons of the Church. The Kirk Session warmly approved of the selection of the city fathers. In their minutes, under date the 16th December 1658, they record that "understanding that Master George Meldrum, regent in the college of New Aberdeen, for his knowledge, learning, grace, pious conversation and utterance, is a persoune that throw the blessing of God, they look upon to be weell and fitlie qualified for exerceing of the office of the ministrie in this citie of New Aberdeen; therefore the whole sessioune beeing frequentlie conveened, all in one voice did unanimouslie nominat and call the said

Master George Meldrum to be one of the ministers of this citie" (*Selections from Eccl. Records of Aberdeen*, p. 148). The high esteem in which the lay representatives of Presbyterianism held Meldrum, and the character which they gave to him, warranted the hope that his ministry, begun under most favourable auspices, would be comfortable to Meldrum himself and profitable to the people. In the same year a civic honour fell to his lot. The *Burgess Register of Aberdeen*, under date the 18th November 1659, informs us that "Mr George Meldrum, one of the ministers of Aberdeen, son of the deceast Andro Meldrum, sometyme bailie of Aberdeen," was enrolled among the burgesses of the town (*Miscel. of New Spal. Club*, ii. 412). About the same time, as the *Records of the University* tell us, "Mr George Meldrum gave £23, 4s. Scots to King's College for new buildings" (p. 547).

Troublous days, however, soon arose, for Meldrum was settled in a district where Episcopacy had a strong grip. The cruel act of 1662 broke, for a time, the tie between him and his congregation. On the 24th October of that year, the Synod of Aberdeen suspended him from office for failing to take the oath of canonical obedience, and intimated to him that if he did not comply with the order of the Government before the 1st January he would be summarily deposed. His close friend, John Menzies, was involved in the same harsh proceeding. The charge against him is thus recorded in the *Register of the Synod of Aberdeen*:—"24th October 1662. The bishop and synod finding that Mr George Meldrum, minister in New Aberdeen, wold by no meanes nor essayes used upon him for conformitie, give any further satisfactione than what was conteaned in the above specified paper given in by Mr John Menzies, in his awin and Mr George Meldrum, ther names . . . the bishop with the consent of the whole synod, did and hereby doe suspend the said Mr George Meldrum from the exercise of the holy ministrie and evrie part therof, till the 1st January next, 1663," with the intimation that if he does not before that date, "sign the promise and profession of canonical obedience," he will be *ipso facto* deposed.

Before the expiry of this time of grace given to him, a new element was imported into the case. The Privy Council tried to reach him with its long arm. It is said by Wodrow

that in the beginning of December, Meldrum "got a citation to appear before the Council, by the procurement of the bishop of Aberdeen, who alleged he could not appear in the streets of that city for fear of the people, irritated, as was alleged, by their pastors, whom they had lost" (*Hist.* i. 316.) Accordingly he was summoned to appear before the Council in Edinburgh. He complied with the injunction and found himself able to make a declaration, which induced that tribunal to recommend his re-instatement in office. What actually took place at the interview is difficult to determine. This at least is clear. Meldrum made some admission, which warranted the Council to replace him in his charge. How far the Council thought he went, is evident from their minute of the case on the 16th December:—"Mr George Meldrum did declare his readiness to comply with the government of the Church, as the same is presently established by archbishops and bishops, and most cordially did take and subscribe the oath of allegiance, in presence of the Lords of Council; wherefore they do seriously recommend his condition and case to the archbishop of St Andrews, in order to his restitution" (*ibid.* 315). That is the version of the Council, but Meldrum never admitted this to be a correct account of the proceedings. In a postcript, which he was allowed to add to Rule's *Second Vindication*, he took the opportunity of stating his own view. The postscript is dated Kilwinning, 28th September 1691. In it he distinctly says that he never undertook to swear allegiance to bishops. All he consented to do was to take his place as a minister in their presbyteries and synods. More than that; he tells us that when he appeared before the Archbishop of St Andrews, that dignitary never said a word to him about the oath of canonical obedience, and when in the official letter written by the Archbishop to Bishop Mitchell of Aberdeen, mention was made of Meldrum's willingness to own his jurisdiction, Meldrum flatly refused to receive it, unless the qualifying clause was added, "so far as to join in presbyteries and synods." This the Archbishop did. The case, therefore, is plain so far as Meldrum is concerned. He consented to go back to his charge, but only on the condition of being exempt from the obligation of rendering obedience to the occupant of the Episcopal chair. On the first Sabbath after his return to Aberdeen, he made this perfectly clear,

by telling his congregation from the pulpit that he conceived he had yielded to nothing but what at first he had offered, viz., to join in presbyteries and synods. Doubtless Meldrum thought it best to accept this condition for the purpose of being able to continue his ministry. Whether he was right or wrong need not be discussed by us. He was perfectly conscientious in the step he took, and believed that it was his duty to take it. By and by, he deeply regretted his compliance, and acknowledged frankly that he had made a mistake. In the postscript already mentioned, he wrote :—" I repent for the subscribing of that paper." He adds, " The Bishops themselves did not judge me a favourer of prelacy."

It was only to be expected that this agreement on the part of Meldrum would be thrown in his teeth by the strict Covenanting party, who long afterwards accused him of weakly surrendering the distinctive principles of Presbyterianism, and complained of the action of the Church after the Revolution, in honouring Meldrum, without receiving from him first an expression of regret. Thus, John Howie gives as one of his reasons why the General United Societies were justified in remaining outside the Established Church, the reception of Meldrum into that Church, his election to the Moderator's Chair, and his appointment as Professor of Divinity, " without any public acknowledgment of repentance of his former way " (Preface to Shields' *Faithful Contendings*). Hepburn also presses it as a grievance in his *Humble Pleadings*. On the other hand, Rule says about Meldrum :—" The worth and integrity of this man is known to all in Scotland. That he complyed once [with Episcopacy] was a token of human infirmity. That he hath now left that way is commendable." Wodrow, who more than once refers to the incident, makes this comment upon Meldrum's action :—" His compliance at this time was matter of deep repentance to himself. After the Restoration, he was courted by Bishop Scougall, and he and his perpetual friend, Mr John Menzies, Professor of Divinity in Marischal College, agreed to stay in their ministry, provided they were not asked to take any oaths contrary to conscience, and promised ' under their hand ' to concur in synods, presbyteries, and sessions with Bishop Scougall " (*Ana.* i. 175). It is quite possible that wheels were working within wheels in Meldrum's case. His reputation for scholar-

ship was so high, and he was a person so acceptable in University circles, that it may be a way was found to allow him to continue his ministry in spite of the Black Act. This, however, is a mere surmise.

Accordingly, in the beginning of 1663, we find Meldrum back again in Aberdeen preaching evangelical doctrine and fulfilling his obligation to sit with the Bishop in presbytery and synod. This arrangement continued till 1681. During the time he remained in the Granite City, Meldrum took a prominent part in the public life of the Church, and engaged vigorously in controversy with its opponents. The Quakers felt first the force of his onslaught. Alexander Jaffray, a most distinguished follower of George Fox, records in his *Diary*, that Meldrum and Menzies in 1664, alarmed at so many people withdrawing from their communion, stirred up Bishop Scougall against him. Two years later, he tells us that Meldrum "preached a whole sermon against the people called Quakers, full of virulent and unjust slanders," enjoining those of his hearers who may have taken notes, to let none of the Quakers have a copy. Proceedings having been taken against Jaffray, with a view to his excommunication, the Bishop ordered Meldrum, on the express representation of Jaffray's friends, to give Jaffray a copy of his sermon. "Instead of this, he sent to Jaffray another paper which he called 'The state of the controversy between Protestants and the Quakers,' and half a sheet containing thirty Queries for them to answer." These Jaffray readily replied to. In 1671, when the Judges came on circuit to Aberdeen, Meldrum in a sermon he preached before them, represented the Quakers to be "a most dangerous and pernicious sect," and apparently put the law, bearing on absentees from worship in the parish church, in operation against them. The Indulgence of 1672, however, put a stop to the action. The Quakers did not forget the author of their trouble. When Meldrum himself was suspected, they regarded the sentence as a just judgment, and "as illustrative of Psalm xxxi. 18, 'The lying lips shall be put to silence."

Meldrum was likewise extremely zealous in his opposition to Popery. A certain Jesuit, Dempster by name, was his chief antagonist. The uncompromising attitude he assumed towards the Romanists, earned for him their inveterate hatred. So much was this the case, that they attempted

one night to assassinate him, when he was on his way to visit a sick person (Wodrow, *Ana.* i. 175).

Though Meldrum had adopted views which separated him far from those who had come under the vow of allegiance to the bishop—and in all probability the supporters of Episcopacy formed the majority—he possessed the confidence and respect of his co-presbyters. In 1676 we find him busy with a Widows' and Orphans' Fund, which had been started within the Synod. He took such an important share in the institution of this benevolent association, that he was appointed its treasurer. The mere fact of such an organization being promoted is full of interest. We should hardly have expected a movement of this kind to have been called into being, when times were so unsettled, and the mind of the Church greatly divided, but the *Register of the Synod of Aberdeen* makes it quite clear. "On the 12 October 1676," it tells us, "George Meldrum was appointed treasurer of a yearly contribution from ministers in the Synod, equal to the one-hundredth penny of their yearly stipend, to be a Ministers' Widows' and Orphans' Fund in the Synod" (p. 311). How the scheme succeeded we can hardly tell, but in 1679 Meldrum asked that his accounts should be audited, and a committee appointed "to think upon a method for stocking, secureing and improveing what shall be found to be alreadie collected." The levy was compulsory. The hundredth penny of annual stipend, certainly, was not a large contribution. Besides, it was agreed that ministers who paid seven years' annuity in advance should be exempt from further charge. It is to be regretted that we do not know more of the history of this wise association, but we must be content to remember that Meldrum had a close connection with it. In this he was thoroughly disinterested, for he lived and died a bachelor.

A special mark of favour in the form of a doctor's degree was offered to Meldrum about this time by his Alma Mater. This honour he refused. His friend Menzies was associated with him in the offer. Wodrow thus records the incident:—"In the year 1679, he and Mr Menzies were invited to a Doctor's bonett [cap] at a great promotion of Doctors of Divinity. Both of them modestly declined it, though the one was preses, and the other the choice impugner in the theological debates, which lasted several dayes" (*Ana.* i. 175).

While in Aberdeen, Meldrum was asked to take the over-

sight of two of the sons of the Earl of Seafield. The boys had come with their tutor, Patrick Innes, who was a cousin of Meldrum's, to the city for the sake of their education. *The Seafield Correspondence*, published by the Scottish History Society, reveals a very close intimacy between Meldrum and the house of Seafield. The editor of *The Correspondence* describes Meldrum as " a lifelong friend of the family, whose voluminous and sanctified letters to the Countess, with their many quotations from Scripture and crabbed writing give every information except what one wishes." But, of course, everything depends upon what one wishes. It will be seen later on that Meldrum enjoyed his second Moderatorship because it was thought he would be acceptable to the Commissioner, Lord Seafield.

During all this time Meldrum carried on the work of a city minister with great assiduity. At length in 1681, the infamous Test Act threw him out of his charge, and perhaps we may see in his refusal to acknowledge the king as supreme in the affairs of the Church and to acquiesce in the prelatic government of the Church, a proof that when his deed of suspension was revoked eighteen years before, he had not departed from the purity of Presbyterian worship. Now, at any rate, he resisted the oppressive claim, and the tie between him and his people was at once and for ever severed. His movements during the next seven years are unknown to us. No record remains of his taking his place along with the open-air preachers of the day, and running the gauntlet of imprisonment. We come across him in Edinburgh, in 1684, at the death-bed of his brother, William. Three years later, King James' Toleration was published, and the way was open again for Meldrum to engage in regular ministerial work.

His new sphere of labour was in the south-west of Scotland. Why he did not return to Aberdeen, it is not easy to explain. At the time, his old pulpit was filled by Rev. George Garden, who was a favourer of Episcopacy, and was afterwards deposed for his advocacy of Bourignonism. In any case, Lord Montgomery, the patron of Kilwinning, offered that charge then vacant to Meldrum, whom he met in Edinburgh. The offer was accepted, and he was inducted to Kilwinning in 1688. Soon after his settlement, the session records tell us, " My Lord Montgomerie's child was baptized," and his lordship handed to the session as a thankoffering, the

sum of £1, 7s. 10d. for the poor. A year afterwards, Wodrow informs us that as he had not made any public announcement of his views on Church government, two members of Presbytery waited on Meldrum, and asked him if he intended to be at the next meeting of Presbytery. "Yes," he replied. When the day of meeting came, he was chosen Moderator. Thereafter he took his full share in the work of the Presbytery, and at the same time was in close touch with the leaders of the Church in Edinburgh. The esteem in which he was held is further shown by his election to the Chair of the Synod of Glasgow and Ayr, which he was unanimously asked to fill in June 1690. About the sermon which he preached before the Synod, in October of the same year, James Stirling says:—"How wonderfully and pathetically did he preach on Hebrews xiii. 17, 'Obey them that have the rule over you.' I think I never heard a minister speak more movingly and pathetically" (Wodrow, *Ana.* iii. 122).

The following extract from the minutes of the Presbytery of Irvine, shows the place he held in its deliberations, and at the same time throws light on the relations between the Presbyterians in Ireland and the Church of Scotland. The date is the 30th April 1689. Eight "Ireland ministers," whose names are given, were associated with the Presbytery. "Mr Meldrum reported he had a letter from Alexander Strang, clerk to the General Meeting, which letter he exhibited, and it did bear that the ministers of Edinburgh and others did meet occasionally, and had seen fit to call a General Meeting to sit at Edinburgh, the 15 day of May next, and therefore desiring that commissioners may be sent from the Presbytery thereto, with a ruling elder; also that the ministers from Ireland settled in their bounds, may officiate and concur in the election; and those not employed be desired to come to the General Meeting." An interesting fact is mentioned in the minutes of Presbytery, dated the 20th May 1689. A list of Irish Presbyterian ministers resident in Scotland was submitted, from which it appears that there were in this country at the time 49 ministers and 9 probationers (Reid's *Ireland*, ii. 361). It need hardly be mentioned that the oppressive measures instituted by James II. in Ireland at this time were the cause of the migration of so many Presbyterians to Scotland.

Meldrum took so great an interest in the labours of James Ferguson, one of his predecessors, that he edited some of

his sermons in 1692. After a stay of four years in his Ayrshire parish, he received two calls to a wider sphere of usefulness. One was to the Chair of Divinity in Glasgow. In prosecution of this call, Principal Dunlop appeared before the Presbytery of Irvine. Before it was disposed of, another call was presented to him from the Tron Church in Edinburgh. The claims of the capital prevailed over those of the western University, and Meldrum, by the vote of the Commission of Assembly before whom the competing calls were laid, was duly removed from Kilwinning, in order to undertake the onerous duty of a city minister. The Kilwinning records show that there was great disappointment among the people at the loss of their minister. It is curtly noted in them, under date the 28th February 1692 :—" The minister was transported by act of the General Assembly." Meldrum came back to Ayrshire to preach a farewell sermon. This he did on Thursday, the 21st July. Doubtless, that was the occasion of the ordinary week-day service, but it must have been unusual even then for a minister to take leave of his congregation on any other day than the Sabbath. The good people of Kilwinning must have had a pretty shrewd idea that they would not be able to keep him long. They knew that the eyes of the Church were set on him, when he was asked to preach one of the sermons at the opening of the Assembly of 1690. Rule remarks about this sermon :—" It was satisfying to intelligent and serious, unbyassed hearers, though may be not, to prophane mockers" (*Sec. Vind.*).

In 1697, Meldrum, who by this time had been five years in Edinburgh, had a good deal to do with the well-known case of Thomas Aikenhead. The details of the charge brought against this student at the University do not need to be set down here. It must suffice to say that Aikenhead, in a more or less obnoxious way, had publicly denied the doctrine of the Trinity, and blasphemed the name of Christ. On this account he was sentenced to capital punishment, in accordance with a law passed in the reign of Charles II. At the present day, no one would think of meting out such a fate to any, even the most emphatic opponent of Revelation. But two hundred years ago, men's minds looked at such a matter in a different way. At the very time of Aikenhead's execution, the Assembly was sitting under the presidency of William Crichton, and it has been brought

as a charge against that venerable court, that no voice was raised in it against the fulfilment of the fatal decree. This seems to be quite correct. It is further maintained in relation to the ministers of Edinburgh, who were more specially in touch with the case, that none of them made the slightest endeavour to obtain a modification of the sentence, or protested against it in the name of religion. Macaulay holds up the ministers of the city to contempt, because they allowed a precocious boy of twenty to be put to death on account of his theological opinions. And Dr Cunningham of Crieff does not hesitate to support the contention of Macaulay. It may be as well to quote the words of Macaulay :—" The ministers," he says, " demanded not only the poor boy's death, but his speedy death, though it should be his eternal death. Even from their pulpits they cried out for cutting him off. It is probable that their real reason for refusing him a respite of a few days, was their apprehension that the circumstances of his case might be reported at Kensington, and that the King, who, while reciting the coronation oath, had declared from the throne that he would not be a persecutor, might send down positive orders that the sentence should not be executed. Aikenhead was hanged between Edinburgh and Leith. He professed deep repentance, and suffered with the Bible in his hand. The people of Edinburgh, though assuredly not disposed to think lightly of his offence, were moved to compassion by his youth, by his penitence, and by the cruel haste by which he was hurried out of the world . . . The preachers, who were the boy's murderers, crowded round him at the gallows, and while he was struggling in the last agony, insulted heaven with prayers more blasphemous than anything that he had uttered. Wodrow has told no blacker story of Dundee."

That is a strong statement, but it lacks complete historical accuracy. The ministers of Edinburgh at the time were men like Law, Crichton, Blair and Williamson, and though no one need care to hold a special brief for them, they were all men who knew what it was to suffer for their opinions, and were not without some supply of the milk of human kindness. Moreover, it is to be remembered that the sentence of death was pronounced, not by an ecclesiastical tribunal, but by the Court of Justiciary. Whether the Privy Council would have recalled the judgment of the Court,

as it is said they would, if the Assembly had petitioned in favour of Aikenhead, we cannot tell. More than sixty years ago, the whole question was thrashed out in pamphlet and newspaper by John Gordon on the one side, and Hugh Miller on the other. Possibly the honours in that debate are about equal. We are only concerned here with the statement of Macaulay, repeated by Cunningham, that no minister in Edinburgh pled for the remission of the sentence. It so happens that there was in Edinburgh at the time a minister, William Lorimer by name, who had come from London, where he was settled, in order to consider and reply to an invitation he had received to become Professor of Divinity in St Andrews. Lorimer was asked to preach before the Lord Chancellor and the other Judges, when Aikenhead lay under sentence of death. His discourse was on the reverence due to Jesus Christ. After a time, the preacher, who had been accused of promoting the execution of Aikenhead, published the sermon, along with another of a similar character. In a preface which he wrote to them, he gave a detailed account of his action in the matter. This is what he says :—" I am sure the ministers of the Established Church used him with an affectionate tenderness, and took much pains with him to bring him to faith and repentance, and to save his soul ; yea, and some of the ministers to my certain knowledge, and particularly the late reverend, learned, prudent, peaceable and pious Mr George Meldrum, then minister of the Tron Church, interceded for him with the Government and solicited for his pardon ; and when that could not be obtained, he desired a reprieve for him, and I joined with him in it. This was the day before his execution. The Chancellor was willing to have granted him a reprieve, but could not do it without the advice of the Privy Council and the Judges ; and to show his willingness, he called the Council and Judges, who debated the matter, and then carried it by plurality of votes for his execution." This is conclusive as regards Meldrum. He at any rate comes out of this painful case with an unblemished name, and shows himself to have been animated with the spirit of his Master, who would not call down fire from heaven to consume his adversaries.

In 1698 Meldrum was called to preside over the deliberations of the General Assembly. The honour was well merited, coming as it did after a faithful ministry of nearly forty

years. The proceedings of this Assembly do not need special notice; but it is interesting to remember that under Meldrum's guidance, the Commission of Assembly published a paper, bearing the name of *A Seasonable Admonition*, in which there is clear testimony borne (1) to the sovereignty of Christ over his Church; (2) to the unfettered spiritual independence of the Church; and (3) to the Scriptural foundation of Presbyterianism. The object of this paper was to vindicate the action of the Church in accepting the Revolution Settlement from the accusations brought against it by the unbending Cameronians. In the conduct of business during his term of office, Meldrum commended himself to his brethren by his tact and geniality. In the same year, he interested himself in a project which has borne much fruit down to the present day. This was the formation of the Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge in the Highlands. In this he was associated with a number of leading laymen, including Dundas of Philipston, Clerk of the General Assembly, Sir Francis Grant—Meldrum's own nephew, afterwards Lord Cullen—Commissary Brodie, and Sir Francis Pringle.

In the following year, Meldrum took part in the creation of another Society, the object of which was to bring about an improvement in manners in the city of Edinburgh. We are indebted to Sir David Hume for our information regarding the membership and working of this association. In his *Domestic Details*, he tells us that "in October, 1699, Mr G. Meldrum being at my house, occasion having fairly offered itself, I told him there were societies in England for reformation of manners; that I had a book that gave account of them, and I wished there were such societies in Scotland." He gave the book to Meldrum to read, and the idea of starting a society took shape. "I told him," continues Hume, "that if he knew any willing to join, I wished he might be active in exhorting them to it, and said he had a nephew Mr Francis Grant, who I supposed might join, and invited him to acquaint him therewith." Meldrum did so, and in a week Grant came to Hume with the book. Meetings were held, one at "Mr Meldrum's lodgings"; rules were drawn up, and other ministers joined. The Society received the encouragement of the General Assembly and the Commission, "though in general terms." Hume states that profanity was one of the great blemishes on

the good name of Edinburgh, and the efforts of this Society were largely directed towards removing it. A tract published by Mosman in 1700, shows the steps taken by Meldrum and his associates to extend the influence of their Society. It is entitled *A brief Account of the Nature, Rise, and Progress of the Societies for the Reformation of Manners, etc., in England and Ireland, with a Preface exhorting to the use of such Societies in Scotland.* A very helpful part was played by Meldrum in the following year, when he published anonymously a pamphlet of eight pages, in the form of *A Private Letter asserting the lawfulness of informing against the Vitious and Prophane before the courts of immorality.* Though the title of the letter is badly worded, the meaning is perfectly plain. In the sermon which he preached before the Assembly in 1704 as retiring Moderator, Meldrum likewise referred to the prevailing lack of morals, and made a wise reflection on the question of church discipline. "Seeing vice and prophaneness and immorality," he said, "doth so much abound, it deserveth consideration what more can be done for the restraint of vice, and more vigorous exercise of discipline for purging the Church of scandals. It is not without cause regretted that discipline is turned into a form of public appearing for so many days, to the hardening of the scandalous, and the offence and grief of the more judicious and sober."

A fresh honour came to Meldrum on the 24th December 1701, when he was elected to the Chair of Divinity in Edinburgh University, vacant by the death of Professor Campbell. He was now in the sixty-seventh year of his age, and was beginning to feel unable even for the full duties of his charge. It was the custom at that time for the occupant of the Chair of Divinity to hold a city church as well, and undertake regular pulpit and pastoral work. The University, however, was unwilling to lose the opportunity of doing honour to itself by having as its teacher of Theology the distinguished graduate of Aberdeen, who more than half a century before, at the age of sixteen, had been called to lecture on Philosophy. Pressure was brought to bear upon him, and at last he agreed to accept the appointment, but only on the condition which the Presbytery and Town Council readily granted, that he would be relieved of the duty of "catechising the people, visiting the sick, the visitation of families, and preaching on week days." This arrangement was ratified by the Commission of Assembly. Accord-

ingly, he was inducted to his chair on the 13th October 1702, continuing as before to hold the position of minister of the Tron Church. An assistant was provided for him in the person of Ebenezer Veitch, youngest son of William Veitch. M'Crie, in his *Memoirs of Veitch and Brysson*, tells us that Ebenezer was appointed in terms of Mr M'Alla's Mortification to preach every Sunday morning in the Tron Church. Subsequently he engaged, at the request of the Town Council and Presbytery, " to visit the sick of the parish of the Tron Kirk when called thereto, to ease the Reverend George Meldrum of that part of his ministerial functions " (p. 255). Meldrum's colleague in the Tron at the time was William Crichton, whose growing infirmities made him unable for full work. This, doubtless, weighed with Meldrum and deepened his unwillingness to accept the chair. The city fathers, as became those who were officially connected with the Churches in Edinburgh, discussed the situation. Their records contain the note that they undertook to " see the said congregation dewly supplied, in respect the Reverend Mr Meldrum is partly eased of his ministrie, and Mr Crichton is become aged and valetudinarie." Meldrum's conscientiousness in the performance of duty is borne out by the fact that even with these helpful arrangements for the good of the Tron congregation, he would only undertake the work of the Professorship for a year, holding himself at liberty to resign if he found the situation incompatible with his pastoral work.

Evidently the Church delighted to honour him. When the Assembly met in 1703, he was again called to the Moderator's Chair. Queen Anne had ascended the throne, and the hopes of Episcopalians were rising high. The language of the royal letter to the Church aroused misgiving in the minds of fathers and brethren, who, recalling all the way they had come, promptly answered Her Majesty and stoutly asserted the rights of the Presbyterian Church in Scotland, as by law established, and its claims to be agreeable to the Word of God The Lord High Commissioner, the Earl of Seafield, was probably nettled at the strong position taken up by the Assembly. He showed his irritation on the thirteenth day of its meeting, when certain Synod records were being laid on the table, in which the doctrine of the spiritual independence of the Church was boldly stated. The Assembly was about to express its full concurrence with these views, when the Commissioner rose and pro-

ceeded abruptly to dissolve the Assembly in the name of the Queen. Remonstrances came from every part of the house. The Moderator was in a difficult position, similar to that in which his colleague Crichton had found himself in 1692, but he was equal to the occasion. It might have been better to have concluded the consideration of the Synod records, but in the circumstances it seemed good to the Moderator, doubtless in consultation with his friends, to appoint the day on which the next Assembly was to meet, after which he closed the court in the ordinary way. It is satisfactory to know that the Synod records, so offensive to the Lord High Commissioner, were produced again in the following year and formally approved. Boston gives a slightly different view of the matter in his *Memoirs*. After stating that Meldrum had been chosen Moderator, because he was acceptable to the Earl of Seafield, he thus refers to the Commissioner dissolving the Assembly. "This having come like a thunder-clap, there were from all corners of the house, protestations offered against it, and for the intrinsic power of the Church; with which I joined. But the Moderator, otherwise a most grave and composed man, being in as much confusion as a schoolboy when beaten, closed with prayer, and got away together with the clerk, so that nothing was then got marked."

This incident brought about a change in the manner of dissolving the Assembly. It was in connection with this change that Seafield sought to show his penitence for the discourtesy he meted out to the Church, for it was arranged that the Assembly should henceforth be dissolved, first by the Moderator in the name of the Lord Jesus, and then by the Commissioner in the name of the Crown. For more than two hundred years this custom has obtained. This collision of authority, which disturbed the Assembly of 1703, brings out one aspect of the presence of the royal Commissioner. He is there not only to give prestige to the court, but also to see that nothing is done in the Assembly derogatory to the Crown or in opposition to the royal will.

During the seventeen years he was in Edinburgh, Meldrum was a great pulpit force. The *Memoirs* of Elizabeth West must again be drawn upon to describe the high evangelical note struck by him in all his preaching. Several references to services conducted by him occur in her pages. "The first time I heard him," she writes, "I thought I felt something I never felt before. He preached on these words,

Joshua xxiv. 15, ' Choose ye this day whom ye will serve.' Where he besought us earnestly with tears that we should choose presently whom we should serve. He said, ' Many will say, I will do that afterwards ; but few will say, I will choose presently.' He protested he would not go out of the pulpit, till we would give our consent presently to the bargain without delay. If I right remember, this was the first time that ever I could observe the Lord speaking to me in public." When this was the case, it is no wonder that she was attracted to Meldrum, and found in him a true Christian teacher. It appears that it was to his suggestion that we owe the story of Elizabeth's spiritual life. " I several times resolved to Mr Meldrum, and told him my case ; his converse to me was both meek and comfortable, but particularly he exhorted me to keep a record of all the Lord's dealings with my soul." Like a true worshipper, she made her way to the Tron Church to hear God's Word to her own heart, and she was not disappointed. " I saw much of God's love and concern to me in this especially, that whatever troubled me through the week, Mr Meldrum came out with it to me on Sabbath, which struck me with admiration ; for if I had told my case to him or any other, I would have thought he had got notice of me some way, but I revealed my mind to none, so that I saw it was the Spirit of God speaking to me by him." In 1702, on the Friday of a communion season, " he observed that a child of God might come to a distinct knowledge of their interest in Christ while here ; and that there was nothing else here they could make sure to themselves, but that only. As many a time he hath been God's messenger to me ; so was he this day." On the following Monday, Meldrum preached again, and Elizabeth records that " the last day of the feast was the greatest day to her, a day never to be forgotten by her, but to be kept in everlasting remembrance." She is " in a strait " to give an account of the sermon he delivered from the words in Jeremiah l. 5, " Come, and let us join ourselves to the Lord in a perpetual covenant," there being " something in it extraordinary to me ; for of all the sermons ever I heard, this was beyond them all. Though I have heard many sweet and comfortable sermons, and many glorious days did I enjoy under his ministry, he being the first minister that ever I heard preach Christ to me so as to receive Him, yet there was something in this sermon surpassing all the rest. It was a

time to me no less than the gate of heaven." Happy the minister who can awaken such feelings of joy in the hearts of his people, and happy the people who have the bread of life given to them by such a minister!

Meldrum issued a number of sermons through the press. The following list is as complete as possible:—

1. A Sermon preached in the High Church of Edinburgh on Sabbath, April 27th, 1690, from Psalm cxxxvii. 5, 6.
2. A Sermon preached at the Annual Meeting of George Heriot's Hospital in 1695, from Prov. iii. 9, 10.
3. A Sermon preached in the New Church, Edinburgh, on Sabbath, May 16th, 1703, before the Lord High Commissioner, Members of Parliament and Magistrates of Edinburgh, from Psalm cxxii. 6.
4. A Sermon preached before the Lord High Commissioner and General Assembly of the Church of Scotland on the 16th March 1704, from 1 Peter v. 1-4.

In the third of these sermons, Meldrum ventured to predict that the enemies of the Church would try to bring in (1) the toleration of religious opinions and forms of worship at variance with Presbyterianism, and (2) the restoration of Patronage. In this he was a true seer, discerning aright the signs of the times, for within a few years both were established in the land. His remarks on Toleration brought Bishop Sage into the field against him, and a controversy of considerable length was waged between them. To Sage's pamphlet entitled *Examination of Some Things in Mr Meldrum's Sermon against a Toleration to those of the Episcopal Persuasion*, Meldrum replied in his *Vindication and Defence of George Meldrum's Sermon*. This he followed next year with another publication, bearing the inscription, *Defence of the Vindication of Mr Meldrum's Sermon against a second Assault of the Examinator*. In 1703, he issued anonymously *A Letter from a Friend in the City to a Member of Parliament anent Patronages*. He sought also to arouse the thoughtful interest of his countrymen, in the encroachments of the Church of Rome, in another anonymous pamphlet entitled *The Danger of Popery Discovered*.

It is only in connection with his efforts against Toleration, that Meldrum's name appears to be mentioned in the lampoons of the day. In the Arniston Comedy, known as *Tollerators and Con-Tollerators*, and printed in Pitcairn's *Babell*, Lord

Tarbat is made to say about the minister of the Tron—" For Mr Meldrum's sermon, he cannot prove half of his arguments ; but an ye live to see it, you'll see him turn as often as turncoat Wilkie, in the Lady Yester's Church."

Meldrum was most careful in his preparation for the pulpit. In the New College Library, Edinburgh, there is a volume of his sermons in MS. preached between the 16th June 1706 and the 15th August 1708. They are not in his handwriting, but were copied from the original. Wodrow had some connection with the volume, for at the end of it there is a note which tells us that the sermons were " carefully collated with the original," and that the work of copying them was " ended at Eastwood, July 31, 1729." The 686 pages of the volume give a lengthy series of sermons fully written out, upon the Decalogue and the succeeding questions in the Shorter Catechism, up to the petition in the Lord's Prayer, " Thy will be done." The exposition of the Ten Commandments is most useful and practical. Here is one of the counsels he gives to parents in connection with the training of their children. " Lay up a stock of prayers to your children. Children of many prayers seldom miscarry. A stock of prayers in heaven is better than a stock of goods on earth." This is exceedingly well put and almost savours of Matthew Henry. When speaking of the commandment, " Thou shalt not steal," he is not afraid to enforce its application to the ordinary affairs of life. " There is injustice also," he says, " often committed in letting or taking of houses and lands or such like, when too great a rate is taken, because they are let out on hard conditions because of the taker's simplicity or necessity, or when they are taken over another's head, or neglected or abused or made worse by the use, as horses by neglecting or over-riding them." One hardly needs to wait for the twentieth century ere plain speaking is found in the pulpit In some respects the seventeenth century may be our teacher.

It need hardly be said that Meldrum was in a marked degree evangelical in his preaching. After his death an admirer tried in verse to set forth the joy which seemed to inspire Meldrum, when proclaiming the gospel in the pulpit. He sang :—

" O how his lips with charming words did move,
While opening up the mysteries of love.
His heart was seen and Heav'n shone in his face,
When lecturing on the Covenant of Grace."

Wodrow's testimony is valuable. He calls him a "learned, pious and laborious minister, who had great abilities for his office, having a most sweet, plain, pathetic way of preaching, yet very pungent and affectionate in his application of doctrine, being of a godly and upright conversation, with a large compass of solid knowledge." And again :—"He preached many years [in Edinburgh] to great edification, and was a mighty master of the holy Scriptures, and blessed with the greatest talent of opening them up or lecturing, of any I have ever heard."

Meldrum's tenderness in pastoral visitation is seen from an entry in Sir John Clerk of Penicuik's *Memoirs*. The year is 1701. Lady Clerk was dying. "Mr Meldrum," he says, "a very pious minister in town, came to see her, at which she expressed the utmost satisfaction, and though he would not allow her to speak, she expressed great fervency in prayer by her eyes and hands lifted up to heaven" (p. 40). It is told of Sir James Stewart, the Lord Advocate, that during a severe illness in 1700, "he used to speak much of his sense of the advantage of the prayers of the Church, and alleged that he found a sensible turn in his body in the time of Mr George Meldrum's prayer for him" (Wodrow, *Ana.* ii. 206). Meldrum's charity, too, was unbounded and was shown to all in need, without respect to creed.

At length the end drew near. The burden of years and service was pressing heavily upon him. Ralph Erskine, who was one of his students, could not get a testimonial from him in November 1708, "owing to his affliction." Paralysis seized him. On recovering from the severity of the first shock, after having been speechless for an hour, his first words were :—"I know that my Redeemer liveth." His last conscious words, which he repeated "near a hundred times," were :—"Worthy is the Lamb that was slain." He died on the 18th February 1709, in the seventy-fifth year of his age, and the fifty-first of his ministry. His funeral sermon was preached by William Wisheart, afterwards Principal of the University. Wodrow says that Wisheart "was disliked a little for the sermon he had on Mr Meldrum's death, when he took some notice, a-covering his faults [his compliance with Episcopacy] with the mantle of love. But I see not why he was so much blamed for that" (*Ana.* iv. 61). At his burial, the company of sympathetic mourners was extraordinarily large. Though a keen opponent of

Episcopacy and Popery, testimony is borne to his large-heartedness and kindliness, by the fact that all the Episcopal ministers of Edinburgh and some of the Roman Catholics accompanied his remains to the churchyard. We are indebted to that strange character, William Mitchell, the Tinclarian Doctor, for the information that Meldrum was unmarried. In his *Dying Words*, Mitchell, who was a sharp thorn in the flesh of the Presbyterian ministers in Scotland and the Bishops in England, praises Meldrum for his celibacy. "If a minister," he says, "knew the great charge he hath of the souls of his parish, he would be easy about a woman, like Paul or Mr Meldrum of the Tron Kirk."

The sorrow which spread through his congregation and the Church generally, on the death of Meldrum, showed itself in the flood of elegies which rolled through Edinburgh. Three in English and one in Latin set forth the worth of the old preacher, and their authors vied with each other in bemoaning the loss which they and the Church had sustained. The poetry is not of a high order, but it comes from the heart. The Advocates' Library contains them in its great collection of broadsheets. In one of them the writer thus pours out his soul:—

> "Could I, great Meldrum, thy great worth proclaim
> With equal art, I'd gain immortal fame;
> I to myself a monument could raise,
> And well deserve the honour of the Bayes."

After describing at length his labours and spirit, the author concludes:—

> "Thus spent this learn'd and holy man his days,
> Nor shall the eating rust of time his praise
> Eraze, while sun can spread his lightsome rays."

A second effusion, in the form of a Pindaric Ode, runs in this way:—

> "Farewell, blest saint, then adds the Muse,
> My verse like thee
> Shall never die;
> But all the title I can have to immortality,
> Is that I did this subject chuse,
> For I shall live in thee,
> Not thee in me."

Some verses were also written in the same strain by Dr Alexander Pennecuik of Newhall. A quotation has already been made from them. A few more lines may be given.

"Bless'd Meldrum's gone, the Church's radiant light.
On earth he shined, shines now in heav'n more bright.
He's by that God whom he so dearly loved,
To endless bliss and heavenly joys removed.

. . . .

Too good for earth, he's fled to saints above,
And there drinks in eternal draughts of love."

The Latin elegy gives us such a clear portrait of the minister of the Tron and his doings, that it may be transcribed in full.

EPITAPHIUM

Viri Reverendissimi

D. GEORGII MELDRUMII

S.S. Theologiae in Academia Edinburgensi
Professoris Doctissimi, Clarissimi,
Verbique Divini in Ecclesia Edinburgena
Ministri Vigilantissimi, Sanctissimi,
Qui multo cum bonorum luctu decessit XII.
Cal. Martias, Anno Ærae Christianae,
MDCCIX

Melleus hic situs est Meldrumius, ore disertus,
Doctus, mente sagax, entheus atque pius.

Malleus errorum, dum sacri dogmata Verbi
Explicat, et populum sedulus usque docet.

Muneris aut sancti tradens praecepta, cavendos
Dum monstrat scopulos, Haereticosque domat.

Eripiens animas Orco, votisque potitus,
Charus erat multis Presbyter ille bonus.

Munificum miseris ecclesia deflet, Edina
Plorabit; summo gaudet at ipse Polo.

P. dolens G. S.

Bell, the Gladsmuir annalist, passes a high eulogium on Meldrum. "He is," he says, "a person of great ministerial abilities and of a godly, upright conversation. His learning is solid and of a large compass, and his principles healing and moderate. His gravity and sweetness of moderation, together with his great forwardness to all charitable offices, do soften his greatest enemies, and contribute to render him one of the greatest men in the Church" (*Wodrow MSS.*, lxxxiv. 4to). To this may be added Wodrow's comment on his old friend, which more aptly perhaps than any other, sets before us the great abilities and commanding influence of Meldrum. "He will make a bright figure, whenever we shall have the lives of our Scots ministers."

CHAPTER VI

GEORGE HAMILTON, MODERATOR, 1699

George Hamilton was a native of the parish of Newburn, in Fife, where his father was minister. The elder Hamilton, whose name was borne by the son, was called upon to suffer for his adherence to the Presbyterian cause. In 1637, when George was only two years of age, his father was put to the horn, and ordered to make use of the service book of the Episcopal Church in public worship. This he declined to do. In 1651, by which time the minister of Newburn had been translated to Pittenweem, Charles II., to whom Hamilton was most loyal, passed through the quaint fishing village of the East Neuk, and was welcomed by the whole population. The visit of the king was made the occasion of great rejoicing. "The minister, Mr George Hamilton," we are told, "the bailies and council in their best apparel, with a guard of twenty-four of the ablest men with partizans, and other twenty-four with muskets, waited on his Majesty at the West Port." A banquet followed at which a table was set, "covered with one of my Lord Kellie's best carpets" (Wood's *East Neuk*, p. 313). It seems to have been not uncommon at this time to use a turkey carpet to cover the dinner table on festive occasions. Two years later, some soldiers in Fairfax's regiment belonging to the army of Cromwell, desired Hamilton to enter into public debate with them, doubtless on the merits of Presbyterianism and Independency. The minister declined to be drawn into controversy. In their disappointment, the soldiers invaded the Pittenweem manse and caused an uproar. They carried their resentment still further, by entering the church and putting a stop to public worship. Four months after this encounter with Cromwell's Ironsides, George had the sorrow of seeing his father and three other ministers of the Presbytery of St Andrews, "carryed by some of the English forces of the Colonell Berrie's regiment of horse to Edenbroughe prisoners, because the day before, being the

Sabbath, they had prayed for the king." The authorities in the capital did not think seriously of the charge. After a brief period of confinement, they allowed them to return home. All these memories this son of the manse carried with him, as he went forward to the stirring experiences of his life.

By this time, George was pursuing his studies at the University of St Andrews, where he took his Master's degree in 1653. His theological curriculum immediately followed. On the 10th February 1659, he was ordained to the ministry in Newburn, the parish of his childhood. The Black Act of 1662 drove him from his work, after he had been with his people for the brief space of three years. The Privy Council ejected him from church and manse, and for the next thirty years he was a wanderer at home and abroad, preaching as he had opportunity. Immediately after his eviction, he appealed to the Privy Council for the portion of stipend due to him. The minutes of the Council thus record his application, and the answer with which it met:—"[George Hamilton, younger] was admitted to the ministry of the Kirk of Newburn, in Fyfe, in the year 1659, and by the late Act of Parliament and the Council's Act of 23rd December last, he is required to procure presentation and collation from the patron of the said kirk and bishop. All his efforts to obtain these have been ineffectual, and the days allowed for this have almost expired. He conceives that he is therefore obliged in obedience to this Act, either to remove himself north of the Tay or go abroad but it will be very hard for him to do so and pay his debts necessarily contracted during this last year at the said kirk, unless the last year's stipend be paid to him. He craves their Lordships' order for this and also a competent time to be allowed to him for uplifting the same. The Lords allow him the year's stipend, he going abroad before March 1st, and removing himself benorth Tay after 1st February, in terms of the proclamation." This, of course, was only justice, but the act is creditable to the Council, and shows that on some occasions, at least, they carried out their decisions without undue severity.

London was the first place to which Hamilton was drawn. It was the asylum of a number of ejected ministers, who did a good deal to strengthen Presbyterianism during their stay in the southern capital. But, on this occasion, Hamilton

reached it only to start immediately for the Continent. His movements on this journey, in its earlier stages at least, are noted with some minuteness by Lamont in his *Diary* :—" In April 1663," he writes, " Mr George Hamilton, younger, m. of Newburne, took shiping for London ; he went off at Earlsferry to a Kirkcaldie vessel . . . In April 1664, [he] returned, having seen Holland in the tyme he was absent." Lamont does not make it perfectly clear whether Hamilton came back to Scotland, but as he was writing in Scotland, he evidently implies that the outed minister of Newburn made his way back again to his native land, and even to Fife itself. This view is corroborated by an act of the Privy Council of the same year, in which Hamilton's name appears. Hamilton was ready to brave the penalties pronounced against Nonconformists, who had been deprived like himself of their charges. Accordingly he proceeded to preach and to celebrate the sacraments in his old parish. This roused the anger of the authorities. Wodrow tells the story :—" Mr George Hamilton," he says in 1664, " since the Revolution minister at Edinburgh, and some other ministers in Fife were cited [before the Council] and when they appeared were discharged to celebrate the sacrament of the supper in their parishes. I know no account can be given of this, save that when the holy communion was celebrate, great numbers gathered from other places to participate in that ordinance ; which fretted the bishops." This commandment of men, however, was not sufficient to prevent Hamilton from proclaiming the gospel of God. He moved about from place to place, taking an active part in field meetings, so that the Privy Council issued a fresh decree against him on the 16th July 1674, forbidding him to hold conventicles under dire pains and penalties. Even this injunction, with its accompanying threat, did not break his determination to preach. He threw himself still more earnestly into the work of ministering to faithful Presbyterians. During the next few years, however, as far as we can follow his doings, Hamilton seems to have withdrawn himself from taking part in public conventicles. The eyes of the authorities were upon him, and he limited himself to preaching in private houses.

On the 8th July 1680, " Mr George Hamilton and Mr James Rymer, being cited to appear at this diet for preaching in several places in Fife, and not compearing were appointed

to be denounced and put to the horn" (Wodrow, *Hist.* iii. 196). So runs the record of the Privy Council. The reason of his refusal to appear is not stated. But we are informed in the *Life of Robert Blair* that he did present himself before the Council towards the end of the month. Mr George Hamilton, we are told, "compeared before the Council towards the latter end of July, who in answer to what was libelled against him, ingenuously confessed that he had preached in the parish of Newburn (which was his own parish), and other places thereabout, but not out of any contempt of authority. Being interrogated if he preached in the fields, answered Negative. If there were any persons without doors and if he stood in the door purposely that they who were without might hear? Answered Negative. Being removed and called in again, the Council's sentence against him was that he was discharged to preach in that parish even in houses" (p. 574). How he employed himself afterwards we cannot say. In 1685 we find him once more in London, taking part in services in private houses. An interesting reference to him occurs in the MS. *Diary of Lady Campbell*, who at that time had gone to London in order to seek indemnity for her husband. The *Diary* is to be found among the *Wodrow MSS.* in the Advocates' Library. The writing, however, is unusually difficult to decipher. Anderson, in his *Ladies of the Covenant*, thus mentions the incident with which Hamilton's name is connected (p. 525). "On one occasion [Lady Campbell] there enjoyed the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, but the privacy with which it was observed and the means taken to prevent discovery, indicate the extreme rigour with which the laws against nonconformity were enforced. It was dispensed in the night time in a private house, where a select company had assembled for the holy service. The ministers who officiated were two Scotsmen, Mr Nicholl Bailie [?Nicholas Blaikie] and Mr George Hamilton, the former, minister of Roberton at the Restoration, and the latter, minister in the High Church of Edinburgh after the Revolution. The number of communicants was about fifty." Even in London it would seem the evicted Scottish ministers were in danger of being tracked, and hands laid upon them if found in the act of preaching. Two years later, Hamilton was again in London. Possibly he was there all the time. Turnbull of Tyningham tells us in his *Diary*, that one of the ministers

who gave him license to preach in June 1687, and granted him ordination in London in February 1688, was George Hamilton. According to Steven in his *History of the Scottish Church, Rotterdam*, there was a movement in 1688 to obtain the services of Hamilton for the new charge erected at the Hague. The name of a Mr George Hamilton at least appears in the leet of three who were deemed likely men for the post. This is doubtless the outed minister of Newburn. He was not, however, chosen (p. 105).

During this period of exile Hamilton's father passed away in death. Though he had come under the sweep of the Act of 1662, the elder Hamilton was allowed to continue in Pittenweem and enjoy the stipend of the parish. His death occured in 1677. He appears to have been a man of means. The estate of Cairnes belonged to him, and he had likewise an interest in the property of Kingsbarns. George Hamilton, as the eldest surviving son—for an older brother, also named George, had died in infancy—came into possession of the heritable estate, the income from which would suffice to keep him and his wife till the dawn of quieter days. For by this time, Hamilton had married Margaret Boyd, a lady from East Lothian, who brought with her a dowry of 6000 or 8000 merks. As he was an outed minister in 1669, the year of his marriage, he took his wife to his father's manse at Pittenweem. One may fittingly express admiration of the courage of the ladies of this period, who were willing to throw in their lot with the homeless ministers. Many of them indeed were married before the act of eviction was passed, but Mrs Hamilton and other ladies of the manse were ready to plight their troth to men who were under the ban of the Government, and who had no settled abode. In several cases it stands on record, that the hands of ministers were upheld and their spirits strengthened by the stedfastness and faith of their wives. Praise in no stinted form may well be meted out to them. Margaret Boyd proved herself one of these heroines, when she undertook to share the fortunes of the banished minister of Newburn. How long the married life of Mr and Mrs Hamilton continued we are not able to say, but Mrs Hamilton must have died some time before 1682, for on the 29th March of that year, according to the *Edinburgh Parish Records*, Hamilton was married for the second time. Agnes Livingstone was the lady's name. By this time Hamilton had taken up his residence in

Edinburgh, for *The Greyfriars Burial Records* inform us of some of the sad changes that took place in his family by death. Thus we read that he lost one child in November 1683, and another in April, 1684, while in September of the same year, his wife died. We may imagine for ourselves how much anxiety and sorrow are wrapped up in these three bare, official entries.

The Revolution restored Hamilton to his old people. He was recalled to Newburn in 1691, but did not take up his residence in the parish till the 10th July 1692. The reason of his delay in returning to the charge to which he had been ordained is not clear, as the Episcopal incumbent had been removed by Act of Parliament in April 1690. Very few of those who had witnessed his settlement in 1659 remained. The boys and girls whom he had left behind, were now the grown up men and women of the parish. What a difference, too, the three and thirty years had made on their minister, who had now entered his fifty-seventh year! During the enforced absence of Hamilton, the parishioners had five curates placed over them in succession. Once more they welcomed their old minister back, but the joy of having him again in their midst was tempered by the thought of the changes that had taken place, since he was forced away from having the spiritual oversight of them and their fathers.

Hamilton, however, was not allowed to remain long in Newburn. The population of the parish was very small, and it was felt that the qualifications of its minister fitted him for a larger sphere. In three years he was called to St Leonard's in St Andrews, and was honoured at the same time by having conferred upon him the Principalship of the College. This appointment marks him out as a man of scholarly attainments and weighty character. But St Andrews was just a stepping stone to the capital. On the 27th January 1697, only one year after he had been settled in his new sphere, he was translated to the High Church of Edinburgh, and here he continued to exercise his ministry till failing heath caused him to retire.

For our impression of the preaching of Hamilton, we are indebted to Elizabeth West. On two occasions in her *Memoirs* she expresses her opinion of his teaching. She heard him first at Largo in 1698. Elizabeth knew of a communion to be held there, and though in Edinburgh at the time she significantly writes :—" To Largo I must go." When

she and her friend reached their destination, "on the Saturday morning, Mr John Moncrieff was on these words, Zech. ix. 9—Behold thy King cometh unto thee. He told us, of a truth the King was coming; therefore make ready. Then Mr George Hamilton spoke on these words, Col. ii. 6—As ye have received the Lord Jesus Christ, so walk ye in Him. As the one was telling us the King was coming; so the other exhorted us to receive Him; the Spirit of the Lord bearing witness with them both, that they were sent expressly from their Master, Christ; and that I hope many can set their seal to. After sermon one asked me what I thought of this day. I replyed, there is a prospect of an excellent market-day to-morrow, we have had such a brave fair even. I was big with expectations that the Lord's presence would be with us." In November 1702, Elizabeth was present in Edinburgh at another communion. The service on Monday was taken by Hamilton. She thus speaks of the impression made upon her by his sermon:—"Mr George Hamilton [was] on these words, Psalm lxxviii., 36, 37—Nevertheless they did flatter Him with their lips and lied to Him with their tongues, for they were not stedfast in His covenant. Where he for the most part insisted on this, that many people for all their fair show and pretence to covenant with God, yet they were but dealing treacherously, and lying to Him with their tongues. O the distress this doctrine put me into! so that I could not hear the Lord's servant deliver his message, but with discontent. Whatever effect this sermon had on others I know not; but for me it dang me both stupid and senseless, so that I wist not what to think or say, for I thought if I have been dealing treacherously and deceitfully, I am out of hope ever to deal honestly. And I continued in this discontented frame for some time." Evidently the searching character of the sermon was very pronounced.

In 1699, two years after he came to Edinburgh, Hamilton was raised to the Moderator's Chair. Apart from the ordinary business which required to be discharged, little of importance came under the notice of the Assembly over which he presided, and which was convened on the 20th January. Two matters, however, may be mentioned. The Commission of Assembly, appointed in the preceding year, had undertaken the task of drawing up a statement of the Church's independent jurisdiction. This was embodied in a paper known as *A Seasonable Admonition.* In it occurs the follow-

ing passage :—" We do believe and own that Jesus Christ is the only head and King of His Church ; and that He hath instituted in His Church, officers and ordinances, order and government, and not left it to the will of man, magistrate or Church, to alter at their pleasure. And we believe that this government is not prelatical or congregational, but Presbyterian, which now through the mercy of God is established among us; and we believe we have a better foundation for this our church government, than the inclination of the people or the laws of men." The assertion of the Church's inherent power in this document is perfectly clear. It was made now, in order to vindicate the Church of the Revolution from the charge of unfaithfulness brought against it by the Cameronians, and to show that they had no just warrant for continuing outside its pale. Hamilton's name is associated with it, because in the year of his Moderatorship, the Assembly formally approved of the contents of this document, and sent it forth to the people as a fitting declaration of the Church's claims.

At this Assembly, too, interest was expressed in the Darien Scheme, and a recommendation given to " all ministers to pray for the success and prosperity of the trading company of this nation to Africa and the Indies." At the Commission of Assembly held on the 8th December 1699, the matter came up again. News had reached Scotland that things were not going well with the daring adventurers. Accordingly, on account of the " several cross providences " with which the Company had met, the Commission recommended to " all ministers within this National Church to be fervent in prayer to God for averting His wrath and forgiving the sins of the nation, that He may yet countenance and bless the undertaking for advancing trade in the nation and for the propagating of the Gospel." This double reference to the scheme in one year shows the place which it occupied in the mind of the Church and the people. The recommendation as issued bore the name of George Hamilton (*Darien Papers*, 254).

The High Church was a collegiate charge. Hamilton's fellow-minister at first was John Law, and afterwards William Carstares. In the *Laing MSS*. in Edinburgh University, there is a folio volume containing the minutes of the " Kirk Session of the New Kirk, Edinburgh," for the year 1706. The minutes let us see that the two ministers acted as

Moderators of Session, though not always time about. Law was more frequently in the chair than Hamilton, but the colleague, who did not preside, had his seat as a member of Session. Thus on the 17th December 1706, Law was Moderator, and Hamilton a member of Court. In the meeting of the 31st December, the position was reversed.

Little more can be gathered of the life and work of Hamilton. He resigned his charge on the 11th January 1710, and died on the 26th May 1712, in the seventy-seventh year of his age and the fifty-fourth of his ministry. Late in life he married for the third time, the lady being Elizabeth Hay, sister of Dr John Hay of Conland. She predeceased him on the 2nd October 1708. It is recorded of Hamilton, by Bell of Gladsmuir, that he was " a man of age and experience, and one that preached down vice with a mighty force, and was humbly proud of the strict regard he bore to the discipline and constitution of the Church " (*Wodrow MSS.* lxxxii. 4to). Clearly there was in him a good deal of the boldness of the old prophets. A daughter, Margaret, by his first wife, was married to Robert Cleland, her father's successor in Newburn.

CHAPTER VII

DAVID BLAIR, MODERATOR, 1700

David Blair was of fairly high lineage. His paternal grandmother, Beatrix Mure, belonged to the historic house of Rowallan. His mother, Katharine Montgomerie, was a daughter of Hugh Montgomerie of Braidstane in the parish of Beith. Hugh was afterwards raised to the peerage of Ireland with the title of Viscount Montgomerie of Airds. Blair's father, who also came of a good Ayrshire stock—the Blairs of Windyedge, a branch of the Blairs of that ilk—was the celebrated Robert Blair of St Andrews, who during a chequered career supported with courage and ability the Presbyterian cause in Scotland. In some measure, therefore, in his own person, David Blair could give the courteous retort to the foolish jest of Charles II.—Presbyterianism is no religion for a gentleman.

The home life of young Blair at St Andrews was far from monotonous. His father was in close touch with every event that was taking place on the arena of the Church, going on one occasion as a commissioner to reason at Newcastle with the king regarding his Episcopalian tendencies, and anon meeting in the same capacity in Edinburgh with Cromwell, to talk over the problem of church government. David, at the same time, found himself a member of a big family circle, for growing up alongside of him were six brothers and one sister, besides two boys and a girl, children of his father's first marriage. All the memorable experiences of their father would be a subject of profound interest to the children. David, at any rate, who was born in 1637, at Irvine, where his father was at the time, was old enough to understand something of the meaning of the stirring events associated with the name and army of Cromwell in 1648. One of his half-brothers, James, the eldest of the family, became minister of Dysart, but died six months after his ordination in 1655. As he was more than ten years older than David, and had long been a regent in St Leonard's College, he doubtless

superintended the studies of his younger brother, who was spared so much longer in the service of the Church. A strong touch of reality is given to our knowledge of the home life of the Blairs, when we remember that the minister of Dysart came back to die in his father's house at St Andrews. In the following year, on the 28th July, David received the degree of M.A. from his Alma Mater.

The sufferings which his father began now to experience at the hands of the Privy Council, had the effect of breaking up the family home at St Andrews. This may have led Blair to look to Holland as a place in which he could live in greater quietness, than in the land of his birth. For during the next quarter of a century, he seems to have had his domicile in the country of the Stadtholder, returning as occasion called, from time to time, to Scotland. Thus we find him in 1666, at the deathbed of his father in Aberdour. A conversation which then took place between the old man and his son, is recorded in somewhat prim language in the father's biography. "The worst and the best of men," said the son, "have their first and second thoughts, they have their thoughts and their afterthoughts. Now, sir, God has given you time for your afterthoughts of your way and carriage in the world, and we would hear what are now your afterthoughts." Doubtless this manner of address is most respectful, but it has a distant tone about it, which lacks the filial warmth we should expect. Perhaps the presence of others in addition to the members of the family, accounts for its seeming coldness.

In Holland, Blair made his headquarters at Leyden, though no evidence exists to tell us how he was engaged. Practically this long period of his life is a complete blank. At Leyden he was in close touch with the university, and was surrounded on every side by fellow-countrymen, who sought across the sea the freedom they could not find at home. The proximity of Leyden to the Hague may have brought him into acquaintance with William of Orange, before whom afterwards he was to appear as an official representative of the Scottish Church. One thing only is certain about the Dutch sojourn of Blair. He was not engaged until the very dawn of the Revolution in regular ministerial work. In 1688, a second Scots charge was erected at the Hague, and Blair was unanimously called to be its first minister. Here he was ordained on the 20th June, when he had reached the age of fifty-one. We wonder a little at Blair being willing

to tie himself to church work in Holland, when matters in Scotland were shaping themselves so plainly towards a great change. The *Diary* of George Turnbull tells us that Blair was in London in June 1687, taking part in the licensing of Turnbull, and again in February 1688, helping to ordain him, but it is difficult to explain how this could be, if Blair himself was not ordained till June 1688. Perhaps, however, the difference between the old and new styles accounts for it.

His sturdy independence of mind comes out in the condition he made with the Consistory, ere he closed with the call to the Hague, for he "desired that whereas he was rooted in the Presbyterian Church of Scotland, and that among them no minister was bound to observe festival days or to use the forms, that therefore he might (if possible) be dispensed of the same, and that the words in the act of the call or election relating thereunto, be left out." The Consistory agreed, carefully noting that this was not to be a precedent, but was granted for "weighty considerations." His colleague in the charge, Dr Bowie, voluntarily undertook to be responsible for such services. In the following year, Blair was invited to become minister at Rotterdam, but this invitation he declined, because he held at the same time in his hands a call from Edinburgh, to be one of the ministers of St Giles. As it was the eager desire of the Revolution Church to have settled in Edinburgh the most eminent men they could find, the call to Blair to come to the Scottish capital proves that he was a marked man. It would be interesting to discover what Blair was doing all through the years of his retirement in Holland, to cause the eyes of the Church to be turned on him now. He happened to be in London when the competing calls from Rotterdam and Edinburgh reached him. In his reply to the friends in Holland, who wished him to be their minister, he said that "in addition to the difficulty of coming over by reason of the French pirates, he had given a conditional promise to the Edinburgh magistrates." Though he preferred to return to his own land, Blair ever held the Dutch Church in affectionate remembrance, and did what he could to further its interests. Thus, in the Assembly of 1699, of which he was not a member, he was allowed to speak as commissioned by the Consistory of Rotterdam, in connection with the settlement of Thomas Hog at Campvere. In Blair's letter of the 11th February

1699, on the matter, he said he urged the translation of Mr Hog, because Rotterdam "had been a city of refuge to our people in the day of distress, as many hearing me could bear witness. In speaking of this, I thought their countenances seemed to assent."

The translation of Blair to Edinburgh was completed by his induction, which according to Scott's *Fasti*, did not take place till the 9th August 1691. Probably this means that his admission to the church and pulpit of St Giles did not occur till that date. Previous to that time, the congregation had been worshipping in the "New Meeting-house," till access could be given to them to the historic Cathedral. Blair, at any rate, was a member of the Assembly of 1690. A mark of royal favour was put upon him in the same year by King William, who made him one of his chaplains. In February 1693, the people of Inveresk where his father had been confined for a time by the order of the Privy Council, called him to be their minister, but he declined to leave Edinburgh. The respect which his brethren entertained for him is shown by his being asked to represent the Church on two occasions at the Court in London. The first was immediately after the close of the Assembly of 1690. "The General Assembly," we are told, on the 13th November, "deeming it expedient to send two of their number to London to attend His Majesty, anent the affairs of this Church, does therefore nominate and appoint their reverend brethren, Mr Gilbert Rule . . . and Mr David Blair, with all convenient speed to repair to London." The Principal, in his *Second Vindication*, gives us an account of their interview with the king, and incidentally reveals to us that Blair was suffering at the time from illness. Rule, in his pamphlet, is answering charges brought against the commissioners by the prelatic party. "It is," he says, "a foul calumny that they who were sent [to London] were gratified by it or had designs of their own. Nothing but malice could suggest such a thought. For what could they expect? Or what could they obtain by it? Had they ambition (one of them being past 60) to ride post to London in the beginning of December? They could expect no higher post in the Church than they are now in." After speaking about himself as a deputy, Rule goes on to refer to Blair's treatment at the hands of the prelatic controversialist. "The

other he can find nothing against; and therefore his spite prompteth him to reproach his [? this] reverend and worthy Father, whose praise is in the gospel, whose name is precious in the Church, and is above the snarling of such a curre. Not one word of what he saith in that matter is true, and the contrary is declared by some of the courtiers that attended the king when he went to visit Mr Blair, when he was sick and on his bed. When His Majesty came into the room, they who were present told that though they had been long about the Court, they never heard a more handsome compliment than Mr Blair gave unto the king, nor more becoming a divine. A chair was seated at the bedside for the king, in which His Majesty sat down. After he had talked a little with Mr Blair, His Majesty drew the chair nearer while he sat on it, but that such words were spoken by Mr Blair as is alledged, is most false."

Lord Carmichael, the king's representative to the General Assembly, wrote to the Earl of Melville about the visit of Blair and his companion. "It hath also pleased the Assembly to appoint Doctor Rule and Mr David Blair to goe up and wait upon the king, to give His Majesty a more full and satisfying accompt of all that hath passed, and they will quicklie follow Mr Carstares, if nothing fall out to hinder them. In the meantime Mr Carstares (with a transcript of the minutes of the Assembly), will quicklie be with your lordship" (*Leven and Melville Papers*, p. 570). Shields, in his *Memoir* under date 26th January 1691, makes mention of the report given in by the two delegates of their diligence. It was submitted to the Commission of Assembly. Shields' words are :—Dr Rule and Mr Blair (after all but members were removed) gave a relation of their transactions with the king that he accepted very kindly of their addresse; anticipating their suspicion of his changing, told them he was now 40 years of age, too old to change."

No sooner had Blair reported to the Commission on his visit to London, than he was appointed again to represent the Church. In the *Leven and Melville Papers*, we are told how the Earl of Crawford wrote to Lord Melville on the 25th April 1691 :—"The Commission of our Assembly has adjourned untill the 17th of June, and the Earl of Sunderland, Mr Gabriel Cunningham, and Mr David Blair are chosen to carry the answer of His Majesty's letter, and have instructions for their management of our Church's

affairs." Doubtless, Blair must have been a very welcome commissioner to His Majesty, but a second journey to London, involving all the discomforts of travelling, must have been no light thing to a man now sixty-four years of age.

Another proof of the high esteem set upon Blair is given to us in the correspondence which Carstares carried on with him. Blair was in frequent communication with William's confidential Scottish adviser, who consulted him on all matters connected with Church polity. Five letters from Blair are published in the Carstares *State Papers*, but it is evident that these are only a fraction of the correspondence which passed between the two friends. Carstares asked Blair to furnish him with particulars of the conduct of those Episcopal ministers, who had been retained in the Presbyterian Church, especially in the north of Scotland. Blair entered into full details, and mentioned by name a number of ministers to whom toleration had been generously shown, but who refused to pray for William and Mary. In another letter, Blair asked Carstares to give him his opinion as to the best method of insisting upon the Church's inherent power of self-government. A few personal notes are afforded by the letters. At the end of one of them, dated the 21st December 1697, and written from Edinburgh, the greeting occurs :—" My wife has her best respects to you and to Mrs Carstares." Blair was long, as we know, in taking ordination. He was likewise long in finding his life's helpmeet, to whom he was married on the 10th February 1697. Her name was Euphan Nisbet, daughter of Archibald Nisbet of Carfin. She was twenty-eight years younger than her husband. Another letter of earlier date, the 18th July 1695, reveals the state of feeling which existed in the Church, owing to the postponement of the meeting of Assembly a week before. That Assembly had been called for the 11th July. Blair wrote in this way to Carstares :—" The adjournment of the General Assembly but the very day before it should have sat, was very grievous to our ministers, who were come in from all quarters ; and it was no easy matter to get them quieted. Many of the more forward of them were for a present address to His Majesty ; but the more prudent prevailed with the rest to set it aside ; and in lieu thereof to content themselves with giving some memoirs to the Secretary, who I believe has promised his utmost endeavours that the day to which it is adjourned in November next, may be punctually kept.

They were also earnest with him that there may be annual Assemblies according to law, which I hope now will not be so uneasy to be obtained, after the act that passed on July 12th concerning the Church, wherein there lies no obligation upon the established Church, to take into ministerial communion with them, any of the late prelatical incumbents, but only civil protection to those of them who shall qualify themselves civilly, etc. So that one great advantage gained by that act, is the pulling out of the thorn out of the ministers' foot and out of somebodies else too, if I am not much mistaken. . . . It was pity to see the ministers flocking in from all parts; and in the meantime their adversaries shouting at them for having lost their labour; and yet more pity to hear the poor ministers saying, they durst not go home to their congregations especially in the south-west, where Mr Hepburn will triumph over them, for what he will call their unfaithfulness, and will be in a ready way to draw away people from hearing them. But I hope there will be no such occasion hereafter. . . . God make all well, as Sir John Scot said to the king." Though we have not Carstares' reply to this letter, the whole tenor of Blair's words shows how close was the friendship between the two men, and how careful Carstares was to get full and reliable information regarding Church affairs in Scotland. A communication from Carstares, preserved in the *Annandale Family Book* (ii. 179), shows at once how Carstares worked behind the scenes and what he thought of Blair. It is addressed to William, Earl of Annandale, and bears the date of the 7th February 1699. "Mr Blair, the minister," it says, "hath obtained a precept from His Majestie in consideration of a small sum which hath been for some years owing to him. Pardon me, my Lord, that I recommend him to your Lordship's favour for obtaining of sure payment, but his work and modesty speak more for him than it is fit for me to do." Though we do not know what the transaction was to which Carstares refers, we are able to appreciate the delicacy and the genuineness of the compliment paid to Blair.

Another letter from Blair to Carstares, written at Edinburgh in December 1697, is interesting for the light it throws on Blair's love of books. "I once spoke to you," he says, "of a book, which I could never yet see. I sought for it eight years ago at the famedest booksellers in Little Britain, but was told that the last two copies which remained

had been bought up by Church of England men. The author is Samuel Petit, *De Jure Principum edictis Ecclesiae quaesito.* I would give a great deal for it, did I but know where to have it" (*State Papers*, p. 364).

As one of the ministers of Edinburgh, Blair took his part in opening and closing with prayer the meetings of the Scottish Parliament. Sir David Hume, in his *Diary of the Proceedings in the Parliament and Privy Council of Scotland*, writes under date the 21st May 1700:—"Prayers said by Mr Blair." Such an entry, during the seven years over which the *Diary* extends, is of frequent occurrence. The highest honour, however, came to Blair when on the 2nd February 1700, he was called to occupy the Chair of the General Assembly. Little happened during the sessions of this Assembly that was noteworthy in its bearing upon Blair. One matter only need be mentioned. George Turnbull introduces it to us when in his *Diary* he says that in this Assembly, there were "great heats about Caledonia." This was the burning question of the day for many of the people of Scotland, and its discussion in the supreme ecclesiastical court would afford the Moderator a splendid opportunity to show his tact and calmness. His personal attitude towards the Darien Scheme, however, did not meet with popular approval. On the 20th June of the same year, the great "rabble" broke out in Edinburgh, on the receipt of news of a victory gained by the settlers in Darien over the Spaniards. All Caledonians, as those who were interested in the new colony were called, were summoned to illuminate their windows in recognition of the victory. Many of the leading inhabitants of the capital refused to comply with the request. The crowd wreaked their vengeance on them by dashing stones through their windows to such an extent, that Murray of Philiphaugh, writing to Carstares, says:—"£5000 sterling worth of glass" was destroyed. "I hear," he adds, "they made particular inquiry after Mr David Blair, and gave him many ill names, as rogue and villain, that did not pray for Caledonia, and broke down his windows" (*State Papers*, p. 540). One needs to go far before finding another Moderator of the Presbyterian Church who suffered a similar experience.

Blair continued his ministerial labours for ten years longer. No specimen of his preaching seems to have come down to us. Bell of Gladsmuir eulogizes him as "an accomplished divine and an exact preacher," and adds that a "grace of

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carriage is to be seen in everything he speaks or does" (*Wodrow MSS.* lxxxii. 4to). At some period during his ministry in Edinburgh, he wrote an appendix to his father's *Autobiography.* In this he had the assistance of his mother and some of his father's friends.

Blair died on the 10th June 1710, and lies buried in Greyfriars Churchyard, in the Covenanters' prison. Colonel Campbell, a son of the Earl of Argyll, writing to his wife on the 19th June says:—"I was yesterday at Mr David Blair's burriall, who was a man of manners and breeding" (*Argyll Papers*, p. 158). His wife survived him for thirty years, dying in 1740, at the age of seventy-five. After her husband's death she lived at Hillhead, a property in the parish of Bothwell, of which apparently she was the heiress. They had two sons, Robert, minister of Athelstaneford, and author of *The Grave*, and Archibald, minister of Garvald. One daughter, Euphan, became the wife of Robert Hunter, minister of Livingstone, and another, Katherine, the wife of Andrew Dunlop, minister of Ormiston. It has often been pointed out that in Scotland, at least, the manses have in a very special measure supplied the various professions with men of distinguished abilities and character. This is true in the case of Blair and his descendants. His son Robert, who married Isabella, daughter of Professor William Law of Elvingston, and granddaughter of old John Law, had a number of sons, one of whom, Robert, became Lord President of the Court of Session, an office which he held with conspicuous ability, while Robert, a son of Archibald, from the manse of Garvald, became Professor of Astronomy in Edinburgh University. These old covenanting families, too, who were the inheritors of a common experience, were often linked together by ties of blood. Professor George Campbell of Edinburgh, whom his friends admiringly spoke of as the "great Mr Campbell," was married to Katherine, a sister of David Blair. The distinguished preacher, Dr Hugh Blair, was a grand-nephew.

As was common in those days, the death of Blair called forth the efforts of various sympathizers in the Church, who imagined they had the gift of poetry. There is to be found in the Advocates' Library a leaflet, with thirty-four stanzas of four lines each, "sacred to the spotless memory of the Very Reverend Mr David Blair." From them we learn that Blair, unlike his father, was little in stature. The closing stanza runs in this way:—

"Of small dimensions here a body lies,
Yet it was overcharg'd with soul we may presume,
Which, cram'd too closs, burst all the vital ties,
And mounted straight to Heaven to get more room."

One line reaches high excellence in which he is spoken of as

"Heaven's pure gold from God's own mint."

A second elegy is likewise to be seen in the same storehouse of fugitive literature. As it bears touching testimony to Blair's worth, it may be given in full :—

"Hence goes a lamp of light, a son of thunder,
A Boanerges, nurse to Sp'rits at under.
A vine on which did grapes in clusters grow,
For nourishing of saints while here below.
A vessel which bore liquor in great store,
And whoso drinks, by faith, will thirst no more.
One who in love abounded to his flock,
A builder who did build upon the rock,
Christ Jesus, whom he held as cornerstone
And head supreme over the Church alone,
Who boldly did his Master's mind declare;
Urim and Thummim on his breastplate bore,
He blew the trumpet sinners to alarm,
And taught a Christian how he ought to arm
Himself against Satan and his assaults.
He pressed godliness, rebuked faults,
Kept down his body, brought it in subjection,
That the malicious could make no objection,
And say that he taught to others or reproved
In them, what he himself practis'd or loved.
Rare fixed star while wand'ring pilgrim here,
A cabinet of wit, a jem most rare,
A pillar in the fabric of God's house,
A guide to teach religious rendevouse,
A wrestler for Zion in her straits ;
One ceased not to call at Heaven's gates,
And plead approaching wrath might be averted,
Gave consolation to the brokenhearted.
What shall I say ? Our day is turned to night,
Our sun is set who gave our hem'sphere light,
Our counsellor, our guide, our pilot's gone,
Who steered his course for the celestial throne,
And sings above while we do groan.
Methinks I hear the saints already there,
Saying, "Make way and room for famous Blair,
Welcome to glory after toylsome days !
Your work is now to join with us in praise,
Unto the great and glorious Deity,
That blessed three in one and one in three.
Which to the yonder world's a mystery,
And ever will, until they come and see."

If all this be true of Blair's gifts and graces, the Church in Scotland might well mourn his departure.

CHAPTER VIII

THOMAS WILKIE, MODERATOR, 1701 AND 1704

THOMAS WILKIE, minister of the Canongate Church in Edinburgh, is to be distinguished from his uncle who bore the same name, and who after serving in several parishes was appointed to Lady Yester's in the metropolis. Only six years separated the two Wilkies from each other in age, so that they really belonged to the same generation. The elder of the two, when presented to North Leith in 1671, accepted collation at the hands of the Archbishop of St Andrews, and so escaped the hardships to which so many of his brethren were subjected. He gained for himself at the same time the name of "Turncoat." His nephew was made of sterner grit, and chose to suffer persecution rather than submit to the requirements of Episcopacy.

The family of Wilkie seem to have been of considerable position. The minister of Lady Yester's "had sasine of an annual rent of iij^{c} merks out of the land of Feirlieknowis and Bewlis." The younger Thomas, with whom we are concerned, was born on the 8th April 1645. He studied at Edinburgh, taking his M.A. degree on the 31st July 1662. In his youth he seems to have been connected with Galashiels, where his uncle was minister at the time. At Galashiels, he met with his earliest experiences of trouble on account of his loyal adherence to the Covenant. After receiving license he was present at a conventicle in the Border district, where he came into touch with the redoubted Claverhouse. The year was 1679, just a short time before the rising at Bothwell. Wodrow thus records his capture :—"Claverhouse, having lately surprised a conventicle in the parish of Galashiels, where were present the ladies Torwoodlie, Galashiels [and others], a citation was ordered against the said ladies and their husbands to compear before the Council. Mr Thomas Wilkie, the minister, taken at that conventicle, and Mr Francis Irvine, an intercommuned minister sent in from Dumfries, are remitted to the Council

[who order them to the Bass]" (*Hist.* iii. 61). Neither of the two preachers mentioned, however, was taken to the Bass. After sentence had been passed on them, they were confined in the Tolbooth, and before the judgment of the Privy Council was carried out, the third Indulgence issued by the Crown was signed at Whitehall, on the 29th June (*ibid.* 149). In accordance with its terms, liberty was given to Wilkie and his fellow-prisoner on the 4th July. The *Register of the Privy Council* tells us that orders were given "to the magistrates of Edinburgh to set at liberty the ministers underwritten, prisoners for conventicles, Messrs John Mosman . . . Francis Irvine, and Thomas Wilkie, they enacting themselves in the books of the Privy Council, for their peaceable behaviour, and that they shall not preach at field conventicles under the pains contained in his Majesty's proclamation; and ordain such ministers as are in the Bass to be sent for, that they may be set at liberty upon their enacting themselves as aforesaid" (*ibid.* 151). At that date, therefore, Wilkie walked out of the Tolbooth a free man, after an imprisonment lasting several weeks.

He was not, however, deterred from the work of preaching to the people who gathered for divine worship in other places than the Church. On the 8th October 1683, the Privy Council had him again before them along with Hog of Kiltearn. The charge against him was that of holding conventicles in private houses. The Council called on him to give his oath that he would cease from preaching at such assemblies. He declined to swear. Accordingly, says Wodrow, on the 8th October 1683, "they fine Mr Thomas Wilkie (if I mistake not), minister of the Canongate of Edinburgh since the Revolution, in ten thousand merks. What was the reason of doubling his fine to what was the ordinary *quota* of Presbyterian ministers, I have not learned" (*ibid.* 446). Hog made his way to Holland. Wilkie stayed at home, and apparently moved about the country a good deal. His name appears in a long list of "rebels and fugitives from our laws," issued by the king on the 5th May 1684, with a view to his apprehension and punishment. Each county in which such fugitives had their residence at the time, or in which they were thought to be living, is mentioned in turn. Wilkie is entered as one of a number of preachers wandering about the Stewartry of Kirkcudbright. It is hardly likely that he was captured, as no trace of further penalty inflicted on him is to be found (*ibid.* iv. 22). He

kept himself in hiding till the Indulgence of 1687 was proclaimed. Then he came to the end of his privations, and entered upon a career of settled faithful service.

On the 6th July of that year, Wilkie was present at a meeting of ministers in the province of Lothian and Tweeddale, convened for the purpose of making arrangements with regard to the altered situation. Two years afterwards, a vacancy occurred in the parish of Holyroodhouse, the incumbent, Alexander Burnet, being deprived by the Privy Council for refusing to read the proclamation of the Estates and to pray for William and Mary. On the 6th November 1689, the Town Council presented Wilkie to the charge. He was now in his forty-fifth year.

Various difficulties met him at the beginning of his work. The old session which had been formed under Episcopacy, still continued. Wilkie proceeded to form a session of his own, and got it very speedily into a proper state of organization. What interfered most seriously, however, with his effective service was the necessity under which the congregation lay of assembling for worship, not in the House of Holyrood, but in Lady Yester's Church, which was unoccupied at the time. The history of Holyroodhouse is interesting. At the Reformation, the Abbey of Holyrood was declared to be the Parish Church of the Canongate, and from 1560 almost to the Revolution, the parishioners worshipped in it. On the restoration of Holyrood Palace in 1659, after it had been partially destroyed by fire, the private chapel was removed. The advisers of Charles II. suggested that the Abbey Church should no longer be granted to the parish as a place of worship. In 1672, the Privy Council passed an act declaring the Abbey Church "to be His Majesty's Chapel in all time coming." But it was not till 1687, that the congregation had actually to remove. "In that year, James II. of England gave orders that the Abbey Church was to be fitted up as 'our own Catholic Chapel, and capable of the ceremonials and solemnities of the most ancient and most noble Order of the Thistle,' and considerable sums were spent in supplying the necessary fittings. The homeless congregation found accommodation in Lady Yester's Church, until the Canongate Church was erected" (Gowan's *Edinburgh*, p. 45). The keys of the new church were handed to Wilkie by the Privy Council on the 22nd August 1691. At the same time, the name of the church and parish was changed from Holyroodhouse to

Canongate. The charge was a collegiate one. James Craig at first was associated with Wilkie in the work of the parish, and afterwards the well-known William Mitchell. In the early part of 1691, the congregation could not be accommodated any longer in Lady Yester's and removed to an old chapel in the Watergate. Their stay there was not long. Their new church which still stands, was soon ready.

An interesting glimpse of Wilkie is given to us in Cockburn's *Historical Relation of the General Assembly of* 1690. As it comes from a bitter opponent of Presbyterianism, it is welcome as a proof of the sincerity of the minister of the Canongate. A Fast had been appointed by the Assembly of 1690, and the sanction of the Crown obtained for its observance on the 8th January 1691. Cockburn acknowledges that it was kept with a great deal of zeal, but adds that the brokenness of heart, suitable to such an occasion, had reference only to the sins of Episcopalians. "Only Mr Wilkie," he says, "in the meeting-house of the Canongate, thought he would be too partial, if he should only reckon up the sins of others ; wherefore in the afternoon he resolved to confess his own sins and the sins of his party, and so he instanced among other Peccadillos, their taking the Indulgence from a Popish King, which was only granted to make way for Popish Priests and Jesuits, who sought the ruine of the Protestant Religion. 'We know this,' said he, 'well enough, but self-interest byassed us, and the same principle of self-interest made us guilty of sinful silence ; for all the time we never preached against Popery, fearing that we might lose that Liberty if we did. And none,' said he, 'was more guilty than myself. For Mass was said daily at my Lugg, and yet I never opened my mouth" (p. 28.). This is clear evidence that Roman Catholic worship was performed in the Abbey Church after the Protestant congregation had been evicted, but it is at the same time a sure indication of that candour and honesty of heart, which won for Wilkie a warm place in the affection of the Church.

Along with two other ministers, Wilkie was selected by the Assembly of 1699 to go to Aberdeen to supply the people "with preaching." Some of the pulpits in the Granite City were vacant at the time—in one case the vacancy had lasted for two years—and the Assembly took this means of attending to the religious needs of the community. As Episcopacy was strong in Aberdeen, the choice of Wilkie to fulfil this mission is a testimony to his prudence and ability. The task

was not made any lighter by the presence of Dr George Garden in one of the city charges. Garden's sympathy with Madame Bourignon and his opposition to Presbyterianism would give Wilkie and his colleagues plenty to do.

In the opening year of the eighteenth century, Wilkie was called to the Chair of the Assembly. As he was still one of the younger men of the Church, it was no common mark of honour to be set in this high position, when veterans like Rule and Riddell had not occupied the Chair. It fell to this Assembly to deal finally with the case of Dr Garden. Two years had elapsed since Wilkie had come into touch with him in Aberdeen. The Commission for "purging and planting churches" had already found Garden guilty of embracing the doctrines of Madame Bourignon. In support of her views, too, he had published anonymously a volume, entitled *An Apology for M. Antonia Bourignon.* As he refused to retract his opinions, the Assembly declared him to be guilty of entertaining beliefs contrary to the Bible and the Confession of Faith, and thereafter deposed him from the ministry. It was Wilkie's duty as Moderator to pronounce the solemn sentence which removed Dr Garden's name from the roll of the ministers of the Church. A reference to this Assembly is found in Turnbull's *Diary.* "It was the design of many," he says, "to have the Church's intrinsicke right asserted, and a good step towards it was made, viz., the King being acquainted with the Church's inclination, and endeavours used to prepare him to comply with it against the next Assembly" (p. 399.). In the following year, Wilkie preached the sermon at the opening of the Supreme Court. We are indebted to the indefatigable Elizabeth West for a brief account of it. She was present on the occasion, and thus records her impressions of what she heard, as well as her reflections on the death of King William, the probability of which had been privately intimated by the Lord High Commissioner to the leaders of the Church. "Two or three days before this lamentable news came," she writes, "the General Assembly were met, and Mr Thomas Wilkie preached at the opening up of it on these words, Exod. iii., where Moses turned aside to see that great wonder, the bush burning and not consumed; where he held forth 'How that the Lord had preserved his church in all ages, tho' in the midst of a burning bush;' where he told us 'that in all appearance there was some sore trial Scotland was to meet with very shortly, which would kindle the bush in a flame, but yet

God would preserve it from consuming.' Now, how soon this prediction came to pass let any judge ; for this was on the Tuesday, and the news were confirmed on Thursday, being in March 1701. O the grief and sorrow that was on the hearts of all the godly, for we truly thought that gospel ordinances would not be continued with us. But the Lord in mercy prevented these our fears." Her reference to the Episcopalians at this time is interesting :—" For those of the prelatic party, they in flocks gathered on the streets, and with a merry countenance would ask at one another, 'Where shall we go and drink the dredgie ? ' These men were big with expectation to be restored to their old posts again, but glory be to God, their hopes like our fears, were both disappointed " (p. 100.).

It seems that the city ministers or a certain number of them were appointed during the meeting of the Scots Parliament to act in turn as chaplain, and offer prayer at the beginning and close of each sederunt. Thus, as Hume of Crossrigg tells us in his *Diary of the Proceedings in Parliament* under date 21st May 1700, " Prayers said by Mr Blair." Blair and Meldrum are most frequently mentioned as undertaking this duty. On the 1st February 1701, we have this entry :—" Prayers said by Mr Thomas Wilkie of Canongate."

After a lapse of three years, the choice of the Assembly fell once more on Wilkie to preside over their business. Queen Anne was now on the throne. It was deemed needful to assert as plainly as possible and without delay, the inherent rights and powers of the Church. Her Majesty was not regarded by the Presbyterians as so favourably disposed to their cause as William had been. The answer which was sent to the royal letter read by the Commissioner, afforded a natural opportunity of insisting on the Church's prerogative. Accordingly it was said—and doubtless Wilkie had a chief hand in drawing up the reply—" We are now again with your Majesty's countenance and favour, met in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, in a national Assembly." This language is perfectly explicit. With great dignity, likewise, the Assembly called for the Synod Records, whose faithful testimony had been one cause of the sudden dissolution of the Assembly of 1703, and these were solemnly approved and ratified. In this battle, therefore, between the Church and the civil power, it was the Church which came off victorious, and the State which had to withdraw its claim. At the same time, too, the Assembly framed the outline of a scheme for

the purpose of providing schools and other agencies in order to give religious instruction in the Highlands. This effort, which had been privately inaugurated by Meldrum and others in 1698, blossomed by and by into the Society for the Propagation of Religious Knowledge and has been the source of untold benefit to the northern portion of Scotland. Such a scheme, undertaken amid all the difficulties which beset the Church, shows how the men at its head were desirous of overtaking the spiritual needs of the remotest parts of the country.

Wilkie had a scholar's fondness for books, and gathered together a considerable library, a large part of which he gave to the Divinity Hall in the University of Edinburgh. According to the *Christian Instructor* of 1826, his gift was commemorated by a tablet which bore an inscription in Latin, the purport of which is as follows :—" This library gratefully acknowledges as its founder, a man illustrious for piety, prudence and learning, Mr George Campbell, who held the Professorship of sacred Theology among us with the highest reputation. By his counsels and under his auspices, the library was begun and carried forward with singular care. After him, it owes much to two reverend preachers of the word of God, Mr Richard Straiton of London, and Mr Thomas Wilkie, late one of the ministers of Canongate, of whom the one increased the collection with 700, and the other with 400 volumes."

Wilkie continued preaching to the end of his life. His death took place on the 19th March 1711, in the sixty-sixth year of his age. His widow, Rachel Sinclar, placed a stone in memory of him in the outer wall of the Church, which he served for so many years, It bears the following inscription in Latin, one or two grammatical errors, due doubtless to the sculptor's ignorance of classics, being corrected.

> R. D. Thomas Wilkie, qui primus hac in aede evangelium enunciavit, quod caducum habuit, hic deponi jussit ; ad animarum curam in Vico canonicorum admotus, munere pastorali ibidem, ad annos plus minus 24, summa cum laude ad vitae terminum, functus est. Natus 8 Ap. 1645, denatus 19 Mart. 1711. Cujus memoriae Rachel Sinclar, ejus vidua, amoris ergo posuit.

The inscription is thus translated by Monteith in his *Theater of Mortality*.

> " Who in this Church the gospel first did preach,
> (And by his life as well as doctrine teach),
> Here lies great Mr Wilkie, who of late
> Was minister of the Canongate.

Near twice twelve years, he in this office spent
With greatest praise, while life to him was lent.
His birth and death this little stone doth bear,
Which Rachel Sinclar, his widow, did uprear
Unto his memory, that of her love
To ages all, it might a token prove."

Like other prominent men in the Revolution Church, the worth of Wilkie was celebrated in a poem, which was circulated in Edinburgh on black-edged paper. It is entitled, *Elegy on the much lamented death of the Rev. Mr Thomas Wilkie, minister of the gospel in the Canongate Church in Edinburgh.*" It may be given in full from the copy in the Advocates' Library :—

" O what a change hath death in few days made !
By making such a Light so soon to fade
In Scotland's Kirk, where brightness did so shine
By life and doctrine as one truely divine.
In 's life he traveled only for to save
Such as might be preserved, ere to grave
They were hence called, their judgment to prevent,
For which he truely was of purpose sent,
A real saint hither, who ne'er could be
Ruffled nor rankled with an injurie.
Yea like to Moses was he in the breast ;
If passion enter'd, it could find no rest.
No scorn nor spight of his worst foes could move
Him to refrain his service or his love
From Christ's poor members, who were his Benjamins,
With whom his acts to memory remains.
More serious and zealous ne'er was one
Than this our pious pastor now is gone.
Learning was all the desire of his heart,
And true devotion did in him still impart
That godly wisdom did his mind uphold
In greatest dangers and in perils manifold.
Of all afflicted souls he took great care,
With prudent counsel and with holy prayer.
His moderation such was as might extort
Affection from those of the rigid sort.
He perfect was until his breath did cease,
Still serving God in 's station with much ease,
Till heaven was pleas'd to call him hence in peace,
To a more glorious and much better place,
Where now his zealous and most pious spirit
Doth a more clear and simple orb inherit,
In an eternal maze of joy and love,
With blessed saints who are now above
The reach of all their en'mies cruelty,
As conquerors o'er death triumphantly."

Bell of Gladsmuir thus recorded his impression of Wilkie's character and ability while he was still serving the Church :— " A valuable and useful man, and one whose piety, prudence and peaceable disposition render him universally acceptable."

CHAPTER IX

DAVID WILLIAMSON, MODERATOR, 1702

David Williamson was born in 1635 at St Andrews, where his father, William Williamson, was a glovemaker of some note. His mother's name was Helen Lyndsay. His education was carried on in his native city, from whose University he received, in his twentieth year, the degree of M.A. One of his early associates must have been David Blair, who, though slightly younger than Williamson, would be with him in certain classes. They attended the University at the same time, though Blair took his degree a year later than Williamson. The friendship thus begun in boyhood, continued all through life. Little did they think as they walked to school and college, and played golf on the links, as they surely would, that both of them would be summoned in old age to sit in the Chair of the General Assembly. Williamson was a member of the St Andrews Church of which his friend's father, Robert Blair, was the valued minister. Soon after he obtained license in 1658, Williamson went to Abdie, to act as assistant to the minister, Alexander Balfour. Thereafter he received a call to the important charge of St Cuthbert's in Edinburgh, and with this church his ministerial life was wholly bound up. The date of his ordination was the 30th November 1661. It is said to have taken place "with the consent of the whole parishioners, the whole presbyterie being present and the heritors and honest men of the paroche with the sessioners." The stipend attached to the second charge to which Williamson was appointed, for there were two ministers, amounted only to 600 merks Scots, but the new incumbent seems to have had private means, which kept him from suffering from the inadequacy of his official salary. It was well that this was so, for the cruel act of 1662 speedily fell upon the Church, and Williamson did not escape its force.

Though he was formally deprived of his charge by this act for refusing to conform to Episcopacy, for some reason which

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is not very evident, he was allowed to continue preaching for nearly three years. We cannot help admiring his courage in remaining at the post of duty, and he is entitled to a large measure of praise for upholding Presbyterianism, in the face of the royal edict commanding the recognition of Episcopacy. Meantime his fame as a preacher grew. In June 1664, he received a call to Glasgow, which he saw good to refuse. The patience of his opponents, however, came at length to an end. They carried out the sentence of deprivation on the 13th April 1665. At that date Williamson vacated his pulpit. With great boldness and keenness of insight, he said in his farewell sermon to his people from the text, 'Many are called, but few are chosen'—"I still own my relation to this kirk and am forced from it; but I will return again and will die minister of this kirk." The bitterness of his departure was increased by the sorrow which filled his home at the time. His wife, Isabel Lyndsay, died in the preceding month, leaving in his charge a little boy.

John Row, in his *Life of Robert Blair*, gives us a glimpse of the situation in St Cuthbert's during the three years of grace, and enables us to see the actual occasion of his removal. "About this time," he says, "Mr David Williamson's colleague at the West Kirk, having preached for the ceremonies, and Mr David having refuted him, his colleague having complained, Mr David was accused before the High Commission. He flinched from his testimony and craved pardon for his rashness, yet notwithstanding of this, he was discharged to preach at the West Kirk." The statement is perhaps too bald for us to make out fully what modification Williamson introduced into his "testimony" when he appeared before the Commission, but at any rate we can gather that his refutation of Episcopacy had found a weak place in the armour of his colleague, William Gordon, who, it is interesting to note, had just been admitted to the first charge. The people, however, were in favour of Williamson. Feeling ran so high, that to quote the entry of Nicoll in his *Diary*, "upon the 18 day of May [1665] being Thursday, fell out the mutiny at the West Kirk between Mr William Gordon, ane of the ministers thairof (called of old St Cuthbert's Kirk) and parochynneris, who would not suffer him to preach, allegeand that he maintened the festivall days, and had been the author and occasion of the removal of Mr David Williamson, his collig, fra his

function and ministry at that Kirk, a good and able teacher. For which much people who were accessory to the fact, and for rayling on him and closing up the kirk door on him, were taken and apprehendit and wardit, and some of them put in the thieves hole of Edinburgh . . . the Privy Council causing scourge twa of them, ane woman and ane man, through the street of Edinburgh."

When forced to withdraw from St Cuthbert's, Williamson betook himself to the west country, and for many years to come, till happier times dawned, he preached at field meetings and in private houses, even while a Crown warrant was in force for his apprehension, and friends were prohibited from receiving him into their homes. Along with many others, he was summoned to appear before the Privy Council on the 16th July 1674, on a charge of being present at certain conventicles. On his failure to comply with this injunction, sterner measures were adopted. In August of the following year, a royal decree was issued and proclaimed at various market crosses throughout the country, commanding "all and sundry our lieges and subjects, that they nor none of them presume nor take upon hand to reset, supply, or intercommune with any of the foresaid persons, our rebels, for the causes foresaid, nor furnish them with meat, drink, house, harbour, victual, nor no other thing useful or comfortable to them, nor have intelligence with them by word, writ or message, or any other manner of way, under the pain to be reputed art and part with them in the crimes foresaid, and pursued therefore with all rigour to the terrors of others." That this law regarding intercommuning was no dead letter, but a terrible reality, is evident from the fact that Mr Patrick Anderson, minister at Walston, near Biggar, was charged in 1678, with having "conversed and corresponded with Messrs Welsh, Williamson, Johnston and other intercommuned persons," and also that he did so far encourage them, as that his house (in Edinburgh, at Potterrow Port), "hath been a common receptacle of such persons, and that he caused them to be furnished with horses and other necessaries and provisions, in order to their going to keep house or field conventicles." On Anderson admitting the truth of this charge before the Privy Council, he was sentenced to imprisonment on the Bass Rock. An instance of this kind shows us the strict scrutiny which was kept upon the movements of all not favourable to Episcopacy,

and the monstrous system of boycotting, with which the civil authorities tried to crush the Presbyterianism of Scotland.

On one occasion we find Williamson preaching in Teviotdale. In the *Memoirs* of Blackadder, who had been labouring in that district, it is said under the year 1677 :—" Before Mr Blackadder left that country, he assisted the very next Sabbath day, the celebrated David Williamson at the Haughhead in that vicinity." It appears, too, that Williamson was not content with mere passive resistance to the Government policy. He is reported to have been present at Bothwell Bridge, and to have commanded a portion of the Covenanting army on the day of battle. This statement, at any rate, is made by Kirkpatrick Sharpe in his notes to Kirkton's *History*. If it be true, we can readily understand the antipathy shown towards him in the later years of the persecution by the Royalist party.

Various incidents which took place during his outlaw life are narrated by Wodrow and others. The story of his escape at Cherrytrees House, when he was pursued by Captain Crichton, whose *Memoirs* Swift edited, is well-known. A similar story appears in Cumberland Hill's *Reminiscences of Stockbridge*. It is there stated that when Williamson's risk of capture was great in Edinburgh, he fled to the house of Sir Patrick Nisbet at the Dean. Sir Patrick, who was a member of St Cuthbert's, concealed him in his daughters' room. Leaving this room to be the last visited by the dragoons, Sir Patrick threw open the door, but when the officer saw the young ladies in it, he at once withdrew and Williamson escaped. It was only natural that such a hiding-place should form a subject of idle gossip, and Williamson was not allowed to forget it by the ballad writers of the day. It was from these incidents that the minister of St Cuthbert's became known by the soubriquet of Dainty Davie. About the ballads, which were very popular, it is only needful to say that Williamson never took the slightest notice of them, nor attempted to turn aside, except by silence, the shafts which lying slander discharged at him. His friends, however, were annoyed at the treatment meted out to him, and spoke in his defence in no uncertain way. Thus Rule, in his *Second Vindication*, rebuts the charges brought against Williamson by an Episcopalian writer, who said that Williamson had " played tricks beyond what

can be showed in any Episcopal man, and yet he is not challenged, but is in esteem." "Suppose this were true," Rule replied, "the faults of one doth not blacken a whole party of men, so much as those of scores or hundreds, which were yet borne with under Episcopacy. What these tricks were he doth not tell us, and therefore what he saith is to be looked on as slander. Mr Williamson is deservedly esteemed among us as a man of good conversation, and while it is so, we love and honour him. If he or any other can make what he alledgeth to appear, he shall see justice done."

Dr Pitcairn found Williamson a suitable target for his venomous jibes. In his *Babell* he calls him Mr Solomon Cherrytrees, and thus refers to his speech in the Assembly of 1690 :—

> "Nixt spake a fellow who looked odd,
> With monkie face and yellow bob,
> His name was Mr Solomon."

The nickname, which thus fastened itself upon him, was sometimes hurled at Williamson in circumstances which made it peculiarly galling to listen to it. Wodrow narrates one such story in his *Analecta.* "I am informed," he says, "that Mr David Williamson when he was, a little after the Revolution, supplying at Aberdeen, was much hated by the Jacobites and Episcopals there, who put all obloquy and affronts upon him that [they] could; particularly on Sabbath, when he was going to preach, they hounded out a poor prophane man to meet him on the public street, and sing and dance on the Sabbath. Whether he had a fidle playing also, I do not mind, but the tune he sang before him, was 'Dainty Davie.' Mr Williamson was grieved at the profanation of the Sabbath, and said to somebody with him, 'Alace, for that poor man, he is now rejecting the last offer he is ever to have of Christ.' The wretch came into church and before night dyed in a few minutes." It is quite possible that Williamson owed the name by which he was popularly known, to the daintiness of his tastes and habits. He was, we are told, the first minister in Scotland to wear a watch.

From time to time during his period of outlawry, he appeared in Edinburgh. "Erskine of Carnock says under date the 9th January 1684 :—"I was about an hour with Alexander Preston . . . and Mr David Williamson." By and by less troubled days began to dawn. On the publication

of the Indulgence of July 1687, Williamson made his way immediately to the capital. Large numbers of his old people gathered to welcome him. They erected a meeting-house for him close by the Dean, which they crowded on Sabbath to hear him preach. This roused the jealousy and rage of the two curates of St Cuthbert's, who tried to have him apprehended by the Privy Council. Early in 1688, the Chancellor issued a verbal warrant for his capture, and Williamson was confined in the Tolbooth for a fortnight, without any definite charge being brought against him. Heavy bail was offered for his release, but it was refused, the Earl of Perth, the Chancellor, saying he might yet bring in a charge of high treason. He passed another week in jail, and then after a vexatious examination, was released.

During the time of Williamson's imprisonment, there was likewise confined in Edinburgh the last of the martyrs of the Covenant, the gentle but resolute Renwick. A considerable amount of friction had always existed between the moderate Presbyterians and the extreme section of the Covenanters, who afterwards declined to enter the Revolution Church. This friction manifested itself in various ways. It is said, for instance, that prominent ministers who had accepted the Indulgence of 1687, were not at all displeased at the capture and treatment of Renwick. It is even alleged that Williamson openly showed his satisfaction at the seizure of the youthful Covenanter. It must not be forgotten, however, that the story is told by Shields. Here are his words in his *Life of Renwick* :—" It is said that Mr David Williamson, a minister near the town, was passing by in the meantime, and seeing the tumult and the noise of Mr Renwick's name, wagged his head, expressing some tokens of gladness whereunto he was transported at the sight. But, within a short time, it turned to his own sorrow. For the house where Mr Renwick lodged, being immediately shut up and pillaged, they seized upon the books and papers of one of his colleagues ; among which was found a little paper, containing some short Memorandums of meetings in Teviotdale, before Bothwell Bridge, wherein Mr Williamson's name was insert and the places where he preached at that time. Whether this was the cause or not of his following trouble, I shall not be positive. And it would seem strange after all the Indemnities, Indulgences and Tolerations, it should be the cause." " All the time of

[Renwick's] imprisonment," he adds, "few did pray for the prisoners at all; except for Mr David Williamson, whom some did particularly describe as the minister in prison, who hoped to be shortly restored to his people again, lest they should have been thought to have prayed for Mr Renwick." Such statements reveal in a very clear way the chasm which divided the two sections of the Church. It is certainly distressing to find evidence of so much bitterness among those who were supporting a common cause. But failure to see eye to eye in all things on the part of those who are striving to achieve the same end, is no unusual occurrence in the history both of Church and State. And only too often in the thick of the conflict, hard words are spoken and unkind thoughts entertained, until at length the gulf between the two parties becomes impassable and all fellowship is broken. Williamson's liberation came soon. He stoutly denied he had any connection with Renwick.

The petty process of persecution, however, carried on against him continued. "In July 1688, a malicious person, Mr John Mushet, reader in the west kirk, one of a lax conversation, as was notourly known, accused Mr Williamson before the council of things he brought no proof for, particularly offensive doctrine, in a sermon alleged to have been levelled against the pretended Prince of Wales, and for his not praying for the said supposed prince; but nothing could be made of this" (Wodrow, *Hist.* iv. 456). The Revolution speedily put an end to this annoying practice, and Williamson once more entered into his old church, as minister of the first charge. For a brief time, he had as his colleague, an Episcopalian who was removed by the Privy Council in 1689. His place was taken in 1691 by John Anderson, formerly minister at Earlston, whose evangelical sympathies approved themselves to the veteran preacher with whom he was associated.

In the arrangements which fell to be made for the establishment of the Presbyterian Church after the Revolution, Williamson took his full share. We find him presiding at a meeting of ministers in 1690, held for the purpose of discussing the question of the payment of stipends for the preceding year. In this capacity he signed a petition to the Privy Council, in which request was made that steps should be taken to provide a suitable stipend in each parish for the new minister, "as all things had been upturned in many

parishes." On the 15th June in the same year, he was called upon to preach before the King's Commissioner. This he did from Psalm ii. 10. "In his sermon," says Sir James Cameron Lees in his *St Giles*, "he narrates with eloquence and pathos the sufferings which he and his fellow-sufferers had undergone, but it is too evident that these sufferings had not taught him meekness and charity. He makes light of those hardships which the Episcopalians were then bearing, with which, he says, they were 'deeved,' and which were only 'flea-bite sufferings compared with what they themselves had borne.' Toleration, the preacher scoffed at." "Curiously enough," adds Sir James, "the most eloquent part of his sermon is plagiarised from one by an English bishop." The sermon to which Williamson is said to have been indebted, was preached by Bishop Brownrig at the inauguration of Charles I. In *An Account of the late Establishment of the Presbyterian Government by the Parliament of Scotland in* 1690, the author alleges that Williamson's sermon on this occasion was "as wonderful as ever you read." "I was at pains," he says, "to number the particulars he had amassed in it, and if my memory serves me, they were about 180."

During the delivery of this sermon a curious incident took place, which may be given in the words of the historian of St Giles. During the sermon "a black cat suddenly appeared and walked across his Grace's cushion. It was a curious intruder in such a place. The general belief was that puss was none other than Lady Stair, wife of the President of the Court of Session, who was popularly regarded as a wicked witch. She was commonly known as Aunty, Dame Maggie, or Maggie Rose, and had made, it was said, a paction with the evil one, who enabled her to assume different shapes." A pasquil of the day, satirizing the family of Stair, thus hits off the strange visitor and her doings :—

> "On shoulder clap made her Mess James embrace,
> And lick the dreepings of his scouther'd face."

The Lord President, who is referred to as Mess James, would feel himself flattered by the interpretation put upon pussy's attentions to him! Lady Stair might well take warning and give up her unholy traffickings with the powers of evil!

Fourfooted animals of the humbler sort seem to have been

attracted by some occult reason to the services conducted by Williamson. In 1702 he was preaching in his own church, when " in the middle of the sermon a ratton came and sat down on his Bible. This made him stop, and after a little pause he told the congregation that this was a message from God to him, and broke off his sermon, and took a formal farewell of his people, and went home and continues sick." So, Wodrow tells us, the story came to him (*Ana.* i. 12). Sheriff Napier, in his *Memorials of Dundee*, roguishly suggests that a message delivered by such an envoy must have emanated from some other than a celestial quarter. At least, he adds, " it seems clear that the temerity displayed by the individual rat, is only to be explained by the assumption that the church was completely overrun by his species, and that in all probability he was quite as much at home in the pulpit as Mr Williamson." A little more piquancy might have been given to the appearance of the two animals, if they had presented themselves together, at one time and one place, not separately and at an interval of twelve years, the cat in St Giles, and the rat in St Cuthbert's.

Mr Lorimer, in his *Leaves from the Buik of the West Kirke*, has unearthed an interesting item from the old records. It is a receipt granted to the Session Clerk, in 1690, for a supply of mince pies furnished to the Kirk Session. Mr Lorimer tells us that this is not such an innocent proceeding as at first sight it might seem to be. Williamson was sole minister at the time. Mince pies were regarded by many people, not simply as a dainty form of food, but as possessing " a deep religious significance," being " eaten in commemoration of the birth of Christ." Accordingly the use of them was strictly forbidden by the stern Presbyterians. The receipt for the payment of the pies runs in this form :—" I, Christian Kinnimont, relict of the umquhile Thomas Fleck, Baxter and Burgess of Edinburgh, grants me to have received from Mr James Hunter of Muirhouse, a crown, and that in full and compleat payment of a dish of mincht peys, furnished be me to him, and discharges him of the Samyn, as witness my hand at Edr. the 29 day of December, 1690 years." Now a crown, which was equal to £3 Scots, was a fairly large sum of money and must have been sufficient to procure a considerable supply of the delicacy named. As we read the receipt of the good dame Kinnimont, several questions arise in the mind. For example, could the Kirk Session

lawfully spend the church money at Christmas in order to regale themselves with mince pies? This other question immediately follows. Does the receipt in any way inculpate Williamson, and prove that he was disloyal to the spirit and practice of pure Presbyterianism? For Mr Lorimer holds that Williamson must be regarded as responsible for the business. Truly, if ministers are to be held responsible for all their Session Clerks or Treasurers may do, a new burden will be added to ministerial life! But after all, may not the transaction between the laird of Muirhouse and the relict of the umquhile Thomas Fleck, have been purely private in its nature, the worthy Session Clerk giving his minister and fellow-elders a little treat, in token of his goodwill during a long sederunt?

Perhaps it would have been more in the interests of St Cuthbert's congregation, if Mr Hunter and his fellow-elders had concerned themselves with the remuneration of the services of the ministers who were over them. That was quite inadequate. On the 25th April 1691, the Earl of Crawford, always interested in the progress of Presbyterianism, sent a letter to the Earl of Melville to this effect:—"I must recommend it to your Lordship's care to forward what you can, that application of the Commission of the Kirk, for an additional benefice to Mr David Williamson and his colleague, without which there can be no second minister, and the first will live uncomfortably from the vast extent of his charge and the pitiful provision of his livelihood." Williamson himself, as has appeared already, was possessed of private means, some of which, however, he invested in the foolish Darien Scheme. His name appears in the list of shareholders for £100, subscribed on the 28th February 1696. A month later, he threw another sum of £100 into that wild business, which brought only loss to all concerned. A facsimile of Williamson's signature is given in the *Darien Papers*. His wealth enabled him in his lifetime to make a generous gift to the congregation. On the 18th January 1700, he presented the house in which he lived, with its garden, to his colleague and his successors in office. The deed of conveyance shows that "out of the entire love and favour he bears to the parish," he made this gift, attaching to it the sole condition, that the feu-duty, amounting to £3 annually, should be discharged by the beneficiary. The house was eventually taken down and the whole ground thrown into the churchyard.

That the slanders and ridicule heaped upon Williamson did not lessen the esteem in which the Church at large held him, is seen from the call given to him to leave St Cuthbert's and take charge of one of the city congregations, for St Cuthbert's, though so near Edinburgh, was not within the city bounds. The call was vigorously pursued before the courts of the Church, though Williamson intimated his wish to remain where he was. Wodrow thus refers to the steps taken to bring him to Edinburgh. "The Sabbath before the Assembly was to determine on the transportation, he expressed his continuing in the same mind, and said in his sermon to the people, that he hoped to leave his bones where he had begun his ministry; and that night, before the Assembly was to determine, he was in prayer and wrestling all night, and had many fears and much sorrow, but at length got out of them, and when the elders, etc. came to him, he comforted them and said, 'There is no fear'; and he was continued by the Assembly" (*Ana.* iii. 171). The Town Council of Edinburgh were well disposed towards him. From their Records we learn that the minister of St Cuthbert's received on the 24th February 1699, a donation of 200 merks, on behalf of the "begging poor of the parish." This was done *ex gratia*, as St Cuthbert's was not in any way connected with the Town Council. Yet Williamson's parish was a wealthy one. Principal Lee, in giving evidence before the Commission on Patronage, stated:—"I find in the West Church of Edinburgh, about the year 1698, £100 sterling was collected at the Communion."

A still clearer mark of the Church's goodwill towards him was shown in his elevation to the Chair of the Assembly in 1702. This Assembly met on the 6th March, and dissolved again unexpectedly, as Turnbull informs us in his *Diary*, "on Wednesday 11th on the news of King William being sick unto death." The Lord High Commissioner, the Earl of Marchmont, at the opening of the proceedings, had prepared the Assembly for a fatal termination of the monarch's illness. His death actually took place two days after the Assembly convened. The time was critical. It was well understood that the Jacobite and Episcopal section of Scotland anticipated a change favourable to their intentions on the accession of Queen Anne to the throne. It behoved the Church to guard against any encroachments upon their hard won rights and privileges. Accordingly, the Assembly appointed a Commission on which, with some

others, all the ministers who had passed through the persecution were placed, to watch over the interests of the Church and attend to any question which might call for consideration. Otherwise the Assembly of 1702 was uneventful.

Of Williamson's church work only a little information is given to us. We find him, in the first place, a strict and impartial disciplinarian. We are told, for instance, that in August 1705, four gentlemen of high birth and rank having committed an outrage at Coltbridge on the Lord's Day, were compelled to appear before the congregation and were fearlessly rebuked by the minister. Other cases are these :—" 1688, James Hopkirk and his wife, referred to the Magistrate to be put out of the parish for repeated and shameful violations of the Sabbath ; 1696, Alexander Begg for drunkenness on the Sabbath is rebuked before the congregation ; 1697, the millers on the water of Leith, for keeping their mills going on Sabbath, are referred to the civil magistrate to be punished ; 1699, Henry Nisbet, younger of the Dean, his brother, Patrick Nisbet, and John Paterson for drinking in a public house on Sabbath, rebuked and fined by the magistrate." The last case is instructive. It shows how Williamson discharged his work without fear or favour. The Nisbets, whom we have come across already, were as a family, warm supporters of the minister.

With regard to his ordinary pulpit prelections, we are told that these were valued highly by people in sympathy with evangelical religion. Elizabeth West has two references in her *Memoirs* to Williamson. " Next day," she says, " the General Assembly sat down, and a most faithful sermon was preached by Mr David Williamson, Psalm cii. 13, " God will arise and have mercy on Zion.' The sermon was refreshful to many and no less to me than to any, it being so suitable to the purpose for which we had spent the last night. . . . As to the particulars of this sermon, they were both so many and so good, that I would but spoil them to put them down " (p. 121). In September of the same year, 1703, Elizabeth went down to Leith to a communion. " I was much refreshed," she writes, " with a word Mr David Williamson had at the table ; it suited my case so near. O, says he, may be there is some poor body here that cannot trust promises any longer. They must have something in hand to trade with ; they will not be satisfied with bonds but present payment. O, but my heart cried, that is my name and

sirname" (p. 136). Further testimony to the helpful character of Williamson's sermons is furnished by *A Relation of my Lady Elcho*, who died from the effects of burning in February 1700. A little before her death, she referred to her presence as a spectator at the Lord's Supper in Kirkcaldy, a few months before. Her words were :—" What Mr David Williamson and Mr Riddell spoke in serving the tables affected me much." (Wod. *Sel. Biog.* ii. 516).

Several sermons by Williamson, delivered on special occasions, were published. The Advocates' Library contains five. To one of these reference has already been made. His sermon, preached at the opening of the Assembly of 1703, from Psalm cii., 13, 14, provoked replies from the Episcopal party. The tenor of the teaching of its earlier portion may be seen from two points, among many others that are similar, to which he invited attention : (1) That God seems sometimes to sit still and be asleep ; (2) That God and God alone is the Deliverer of Zion. At the close he enters upon a strong defence of Presbyterianism, as the form of Church government set forth in the New Testament, and draws a clear distinction between the spheres of ecclesiastical and civil authority. Of the Church of Scotland he says :—" No children on earth have a better reason to say ' We are not ashamed of our Mother,' and it were to be wished that the saying were reciprocally true." Bishop Sage took up the pen in opposition to the views expressed by the retiring Moderator. In the pamphlet he issued, the bishop departs somewhat from the habit of courtesy and gentleness which usually characterize him, and introduces personalities which do not help discussion on a very important topic. In one place he remarks :—" This puts me in mind of the trick that was played to Lady Cherrytrees." Elsewhere he gibes at Williamson for taking " seven or eight wives to prevent plethorics and pleurisies."

As a sample of Williamson's preaching, let one paragraph be taken from the sermon he preached in the Parliament House in Edinburgh on the 17th November 1700, before " His Majesty's High Commissioner and Many of the Nobility, Barrons, Burrows, Members of the High Court of Parliament." His subject was Christ weeping over Jerusalem, Luke xix. 41, 42. In a *Preface* delivered before prayer, he addressed his hearers in these direct terms :—" I would speak that word to this Honourable Assembly, which Paul hath, Rom. x. 1, My heart's desire and prayer to God for

you all is, that you may be saved . . . Beware of drowsiness, lightness and wandering, and let us call on God for his countenance, blessing and assistance." A preacher who could say these things to his audience, knew the meaning of preaching and was intent on fulfilling the purpose of preaching. In dealing with "the things that belong to our peace," which we ought to know, he spoke thus, under "Head 2—We must know Christ in his Priestly Office. (1) As to his Satisfaction, who has payed a competent price for our Ransom. He has obtained a discharge, in sign and token whereof it is said he died for our sins to pay our Debt, and rose for our Righteousness to prove the payment was accepted and accompts cleared, else he had not got out of prison; thus God's righteousness is declared that he is just to justifie them that believe in Jesus; having got payment of the Cautioner, he will not crave it over again at the believer's hands. O what a cordial is this to those weighted with the sense of guilt. (2) Then as to his Intercession—We have a Friend in Heaven before us, who is called the Angel, having a golden censer with much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all Saints upon the Golden Altar which is before the Throne. He compears before God for us. When Law, Satan and Conscience accuse, he rises up and appears for the poor Sinner to answer what can be charged upon him. And this is sweet that he never lost a cause he took in hand. The Father hears him always. He was never denied a suit." When we remember that this was delivered *ex tempore*, in which form it would be expanded, we can better realise the power and experimental character of Williamson's preaching. The printed sermon, too, is flowered with scripture references, which he doubtless quoted and which give proof of his intimate acquaintance with the word of God. He closed his sermon with the solemn appeal:—"I charge you all to think on it; and if not, I take Heaven and Earth, the timber and stones of this house, and everyone witness against another, and your own consciences which are as a thousand witnesses, I am free from your blood."

In 1695 Williamson published a sermon which he preached on Hezekiah's prayer (Isaiah xxxviii. 3), and long after his death, his son printed a discourse which filial affection at least deemed worthy of appearing in a permanent form. The occasion and nature of it are sufficiently set forth in the title it bears—*Scotland's Sin, Danger and Duty, Preach't*

at the West Kirk, August 23rd, 1696, *Being a solemn Fast-Day, upon Occasion of the great Dearth and Famine. It was taken from his Mouth in Short-hand. Now published as a Word in Season, by Mr John Williamson, Minister at Inveresk and Musselburgh*, 1720.

At Wodrow's request, David Williamson drew up *An Account of the Sufferings from* 1660 *to* 1688. A copy of this MS., extending to twenty pages quarto, is to be found in the *Wodrow Collection of MSS.* in the Advocates' Library.

One striking circumstance in Williamson's life cannot be omitted by his biographer. He gained the distinction of being the most frequently married minister in the Scottish Church, and perhaps the most frequently married man in the Scottish nation. On seven successive occasions he led a bride to the altar. Dr Hew Scott gives a list of them in the *Fasti*, which is not wholly correct. The most reliable account of them and of some of their descendants is to be found in *The Herald and Genealogist* for 1873. According to it Williamson married :—

1st. Isabel Lyndsay, who died in March 1665.
2nd. Margaret Scott.
3rd. Jean, daughter of William Kerr of Cherrytrees. This marriage took place about 1676.
4th. Margaret Melwing, who was probably the mother of the Rev. John Williamson of Inveresk.
5th. Margaret, daughter of William Dougal of Dysart. Some verses written on her death have been printed in Maidment's *Packet of Pestilent Pasquils*.
6th. A lady, name unknown.
7th. Jean, daughter of Arthur Straiton of Kirksyde in Forfarshire. This marriage was celebrated on the 10th May 1700, and gave rise to more than one pasquil in Maidment's *Packet*.

Jean Straiton was evidently a good deal younger than her husband. After his death she continued to live in Edinburgh, occupying a house in Riddle's Close, in the High Street (Wilson's *Memorials of Edin.* i. 219). In 1717 she married a second time, her husband being John Martine of Little Airies in Wigtonshire.

It is stated by Kirkpatrick Sharpe that when Williamson went to London as a deputy to present an address to King William, the circle was like the Black Hole of Calcutta, from the crowd of ladies who pressed into the royal presence

to see this wonderful husband. Sharpe's authority is a pamphlet called *The Spirit of Calumny and Slander examined*, 1693, which mentions the "celebrated Mr Williamson, whom all the ladies flocked to see from all the corners of the Court, when he delivered his harangue before Queen Mary." Doubtless this is quite true, and we can only wonder to what a pitch the curious interest of the guests of the Queen would have been raised, if Williamson had visited the Court, after he had wedded for the seventh time.

It was only to be expected that a matrimonial record so unique should provide matter for good-natured banter and evil-spirited gossip. In a *Comedy written on the occasion of an attempt to tolerate Episcopacy in* 1703, preserved in the Arniston archives and printed in the notes to Pitcairn's *Babell*, the leading men in the Church and State are made to play a part. Williamson is introduced among them, and Viscount Tarbat is represented as twitting him for having seen seven revolutions, with an evident reference to his matrimonial experiences. But while we cannot help sharing the amazement which filled his contemporaries, as they saw Williamson's domestic history upset all respectable actuarial calculations, it must be admitted that the man who could gain the affections of seven ladies in succession, must have been possessed of personal attractions of no mean order.

Williamson had a large family. His youngest son, Joseph, born a short time before his father's death, became an advocate and one of the city clerks of Edinburgh. Joseph died in 1795, in his ninetieth year. As Williamson was born in 1635, we have the striking fact that an interval of 160 years elapsed between the birth of the father and the death of his youngest son.

Williamson died on the 6th August 1706, in the seventy-second year of his age and the forty-fifth of his ministry. He was buried in St Cuthbert's Churchyard, beside the remains of Robert Pont, a former minister of the parish. The letters D. W. cut on the lintel of the vault, alone mark his resting-place. It is curious to note that De Quincey's grave is within a few feet of Williamson's.

His best known son, John, minister of Inveresk, wrote to Wodrow an interesting account of his father's last days. "Take the following account of my father's death," he says, "and some circumstances of it. Some months before at a table at my communion, he was in a great rapture speaking

of glory in heaven, and said very peremptorily he would never have another opportunity of that kind in this place. At the sacrament in his own church, which was about ten days before his death, he was in such another rapture. Speaking of glory at that table he served (I was hard by him, and I well remember his face, eyes and countenance wonderfully discovered the extraordinary frame of his mind), he happened particularly to speak of the eternity of glory in heaven, under that phrase, 'It's glory to come, glory to come, and always, through all eternity, glory *to come*.' That phrase I cannot tell how often he repeated ; he could hardly for a long time get his mind off it, and while he spoke it, was in the greatest rapture I ever saw any person. After sacrament, he preached his last sermon on 1 John iii. 3. 'And every one that hath this hope, etc,' wherein he discoursed wonderfully on that purity of holiness and hope of glory, which many do remember with delight. The week after he took his indisposition. (He was very cheerful at the Presbytery.) He had no painful sickness, only a flux and weakness which carried him off. He was sensible, and spoke till within five minutes of his departure I discoursed with him the day he died anent several of the texts he had preached on, which he remembered with great joy. He had a pleasant sedate frame, engrossed himself with a solid strong faith, but not with any remarkable rapture of joy that I could observe, except once, when he happened to speak of the righteousness of Christ. The advocate, Sir James Stewart, visited him, and having made some insinuations of the good services he had done, he entreated him to forbear that discourse, forasmuch as he was yet in the body, and said all he did was nothing ; all he could say was, that he blessed God He gave him a willing mind. But he desired only to lean to the righteousness of Christ, which he wonderfully extolled. He gave grave admonitions to his parishioners and family till the last. Several ministers prayed. He ordered they should all pray *per vices* [by turns] even when his speech should be laid. He spoke of his expected departure with a great deal of composure, and without the least apparent fear, and sometimes would have felt his own pulse. He told he was afraid of a storm in this land, and of a foul mixture (this was his word) by the Union, which was then but beginning (his death being Aug. 6th 1706). I think he did not say anything concerning singing in time of his departure, but Mr Brown [minister of

Abercorn and his son-in-law] did it; he sang the 118th Psalm, 17-20 verses, and at the very last line, 'And I the Lord will bless,' he expired, without any struggle or pangs in the least. It was very remarkable to see the frame of the witnesses—a sweet mixture of grief, joy and concern" (Wodrow, *Corr.* i. 444). This letter was written by John Williamson in 1713, and accordingly embodies the son's impressions of his father's closing hours, seven years after his father died. On that account it is all the more valuable.

Williamson left a considerable amount of property. His library and MSS. were valued at £696, 13s., his watch at £36, and the rest of his estate at £5305, 1s. 2d.

A portrait of Williamson is thus described by Chambers in his *Traditions of Edinburgh.* "The Earl of Leven's country house was for a long time Leven Lodge near Edinburgh, which afterwards came into the possession of Mr Joseph Williamson, advocate, youngest son of Mass David Williamson. There is at the house a portrait of this singular worthy by Sir John Medina. He is a handsome, sly looking, pawky priest, with a large wig, a curious leering expression in his eye and a book in his hand" (i. 217 *n.*). Chambers, who wrote in 1825, adds the interesting fact that Joseph Williamson lived to see the fifth generation of his descendants. Kirkpatrick Sharpe refers to the same portrait in a letter to Lord Leven, dated the 3rd August 1817. "I lately was lucky enough," he says, "to discover the original of Mass David Williamson. . . . The picture belongs to his great-grandson, Colonel Williamson, and is done by Sir John Medina. Alas! it represents this squire of dames antient, but still there is a twinkle of a dark eye and the smile among the wrinkles, that denoteth a snake in the grass. I have borrowed it to take a copy." Sharpe probably forgot that sometimes the eye only sees what it wants to see. Doubtless, Medina's portrait and the copy obtained by Sharpe are still in existence.

There does not appear to be alive at the present day any representative of Williamson in the male line. The last descendant who bore his name was Francis Alexander Williamson, Major in the East India Company's service. He died unmarried in 1855. Of others who could claim blood relationship with him, it is enough to mention the Rev. Dr David Johnston of North Leith, the Honourable Patrick Robertson, one of the Senators of the College of Justice, and the Rev. James Macnair of Canongate parish.

CHAPTER X

WILLIAM CARSTARES, MODERATOR, 1705, 1708, 1711 AND 1715

THE services of Carstares to Church and State entitle him to the highest place in the esteem of the Scottish nation. He who was the confidential adviser of William of Orange, who occupied on four occasions the Chair of the General Assembly, who filled with dignity the Principalship of Edinburgh University, and who was the chief means of procuring the settlement of Presbyterianism at the Revolution, must have been a man of outstanding gifts and graces. The record of his career is the history of the period in which he played so prominent a part.

The sorrowful experiences of his early days, during which his father was deprived of church and manse, and forced to wander from place to place in order to escape the strong hand of persecution, impressed his mind in an unforgettable degree. The memory of his father's exile with all its sorrows, and the loneliness of his mother, who was left to struggle with her little children, and with whom her husband could only correspond under an assumed name, was a potent means of awakening his mind to a true conception of the needs of his country and his Church, and of inspiring him with the resolution to devote his energies to the removal of oppression and the introduction of civil and religious liberty. That father, indeed, whose active ministry of fifteen years was divided between the parish of Cathcart and the Cathedral Church of Glasgow, never sympathized with his son's eager participation in the general movement of the nation towards freedom. He even looked on the doings of his son and the evil notoriety into which he himself was brought as a grievance which he might easily have been spared. Frequently he poured out his heart in the vain wish that his son would keep within the limits of the work of a Christian minister, and not entangle himself in the perils and temptations of political life. This lack of sympathy on the part of his father, possibly

affords us the explanation of the silence preserved by Carstares in his home correspondence, on the projects with which he was always so busy. The old man made his cross heavier by refusing to speak to his son for some days on one of William's visits to the family. Yet Carstares dearly loved his father, and his letter to his sister from Holland on hearing of the death of his mother, abundantly testifies to the warm affection he had for her. To his eldest sister, Sarah, afterwards the wife of her cousin, Principal Dunlop, he always wrote in the kindest way.

Carstares was born at Cathcart on the 11th February 1649. He received his early education in the house of Mr Sinclair, minister of Ormiston, a man of scholarly attainments, who always had under his roof, boys of good family entrusted to his care. As Latin was the only permitted means of conversation in the Ormiston manse, Carstares was enabled to lay here the foundation of his remarkable knowledge of that language. He came across Sinclair again in Holland, where his old tutor, a fugitive like himself, preached to the congregation at Delft for four years before his death in 1687.

In due course Carstares went to Edinburgh University, passed through the different classes with distinction, and took his degree at the age of eighteen. His father, anxious to prepare him for the ministry, resolved to send him to Utrecht. No doubt it was a common procedure at the time for graduates in Scotland to betake themselves to the Dutch Universities for their theological training. But John Carstares had little idea of the results which were to flow from the step he took, when he found ways and means of sending his son to study Hebrew under Leusden, and Divinity under Witsius. No record has reached us of his class work abroad, nor do we know definitely about his license or his ordination to the ministry. A writer in the *Christian Instructor* of 1827, assures us that Carstares underwent the usual trials for license in Scotland about 1680 or 1681, before one of the Classes of Presbyterian ministers. But this is uncertain. In all probability he obtained ordination from the Dutch Church, which was in the habit of granting it to Scottish theological students, during the time of trouble in their own land. Support is given to this belief by the existence of a certificate signed by eight ministers—the best known names attached to it being those of Matthew Sylvester and Robert Trail—and testifying that William Carstares was known to them to be " a

lawful ordained minister of the gospel." It bears the date of the 9th June 1681.

In journeying to Utrecht, Carstares received in London a letter of introduction to the physician of the Prince of Orange. It was not long till he was welcomed by William himself, who even now was taking a deep interest in the affairs of Britain. The result was that in 1672, Carstares left Holland for Scotland, the bearer of letters "written in white ink," a fact which not only proves the importance of the documents, but also the confidence placed by the Dutch Government in the young Scottish preacher, who must have been showing already that capacity for statesmanship for which he was so conspicuous in later life. Unfortunately the ship in which he sailed to England was seized, and the letters were captured by the Government of Charles. Carstares himself escaped. He made his way back to Holland, but on coming again to London two years later, he was arrested and confined in the Tower. Thereafter he was sent to Scotland, and committed in February 1675, to Edinburgh Castle without trial, for engaging in treasonable negotiations. During the four years and a half of his incarceration, he seems to have been kindly treated by his captors. A beautiful trait of his character is brought out by a letter to his sister after he gained his freedom. In it he says :—"I hope you will not forget the obligation I am under to friends in the Castle." And again, "When you return to Edinburgh, pray wait upon the Lady Lundin [the wife of the governor of the Castle] as often as you can." As far as we are able to gather, Carstares during this period of imprisonment never saw his father, who now lived in Edinburgh. Probably his son's conduct was too great a grief to the old man, who could only mourn that William was so foolish as to turn aside from the true work of the ministry. Before his release, which was granted to him by "royal clemency" on the 29th July 1679, stirring events had taken place in Scotland. In the preceding month, the skirmish at Drumclog and the memorable fight at Bothwell Bridge had occurred.

Taking advantage of his release, Carstares left Scotland, and after a visit to friends in Ireland, came to London, where he was asked to take charge of a small Presbyterian church at Theobalds, in Cheshunt parish in Hertfordshire, where Rumbald, of Rye House fame, is said to have been one of his frequent hearers. On the 6th June 1682, he married

Elizabeth, daughter of Peter Kekewich, of Trehawk, Cornwall. Soon after, owing to rising troubles in England, he left for Holland. In 1683, we find him again in Utrecht.

Events now moved quickly towards their inevitable crisis in Britain and in Holland. Carstares visited England and Scotland once or twice, in connection with the proceedings of the Protestant party. The Whig plot under Shaftesbury fell through. The Rye House plot with Ferguson, the erratic Scottish minister, at its head, likewise failed. Carstares indignantly refused to have anything to do with it, as soon as Ferguson told him of the proposal to remove Charles and his brother by assassination. This scheme was discovered, and Carstares' name appeared on the papers seized. At Tenterden in Kent, whither he had gone for safety, and where he assumed his mother's name of Mure, he was arrested in July 1683, a few days after the execution of Lord Russell. Asserting his complete innocence of any act of treason, he was imprisoned, and on the 30th October, ordered to be removed to Edinburgh. The real reason of this transference, which he held to be illegal, inasmuch as the seat of the misdemeanour with which he was charged was in England, was, as he himself surmised, in order that torture might be applied to wring from him a confession. With other state prisoners he came by sea in His Majesty's yacht, *Kitchin*, and reaching Leith on the 14th November, was immediately lodged in the Tolbooth of Edinburgh.

His suspicions were fully justified. For some reason, the Lord Advocate, the Bloody Mackenzie, was fairly friendly towards him. His wife, who had come from Holland on hearing of his capture, was able to correspond with him. In one of his notes to her he says :—" If it be fit, you may after a day or two, if we have quiet, see the advocate and Lundie's lady." This shows a measure of kindness which we do not usually associate with the name of Sir George. Evidently, however, his wife was not permitted to visit him, but he was able to see her from the window of his prison. This sentence is pathetic :—" I shall be glad to see thee once a day, either about eleven in the forenoon or four in the afternoon ; and if reports be refreshing, then hold up both hands ; if otherwise, hold up but one." Imagination may well try to picture the spot, where the sore-stricken wife made the signal of weal or woe to her afflicted husband.

It was not till the 5th September 1684, that the Privy

Council, anxious to discover the doings of Argyll in Holland, proceeded to examine Carstares. A fellow-prisoner, Spence, secretary to Argyll, had under torture admitted that "Mr Red" in the cipher used, was Carstares. On his first examination, Carstares stoutly refused to implicate his friends. On the evening of the same day, torture was applied to him by the thumbkins, there being used in his case for the first time a new form of this shocking instrument of cruelty, which General Dalzell had brought with him from Russia. Even some of his judges could not stand the sight of the sufferer's agony, and left the room. For more than an hour, Carstares was subjected to the barbaric treatment, in which his fingers were crushed to the bone. The boot was next tried, but the clumsiness of the executioner, we are told, made it ineffectual. May it not be that the kindly heart of the warder kept him from adjusting the apparatus correctly? On his release from the thumbkins, Carstares was informed that severer punishment awaited him on the morrow. When the morrow came, he agreed in response to the friendly communication of one of the councillors, to reply to the questions put, but only on the express condition that no statement he made should ever be used in a court of justice against any individual. The questions were asked and answered. Very soon Carstares found, that the honour of the Privy Council was a broken reed on which to lean. A version of his answers, which he himself described as "maimed," and without the questions put to him, was without delay sold on the streets of Edinburgh. This was bad enough, but what cut his heart to the quick was, lest he should appear to have saved himself at the expense of his friends. The sorest stab of all was given to him when his confession was used as evidence against his old comrade, Baillie of Jerviswood.

What are we to say about Carstares' compact with his examiners? Was he right in escaping further torture in this way? If a reply be made in the negative, let it be remembered that it is one thing to inspect the thumbkins in a museum, and quite another to endure for an hour the excruciating agony they were fitted to inflict. Moreover, in his confession, Carstares spoke only of matters which he believed to be within the knowledge of the Privy Council. He had, as well, the express stipulation of his judges that his evidence would never be used against any person. And as a last element in the case, it is only the truth to say, that

Carstares kept to himself secrets of a very important character, entrusted to him by the Prince of Orange, which the Privy Council would have given much to find out. The meanness of the authorities, at least of Bloody Mackenzie in Jerviswood's trial, is brought out by the fact, that while in Carstares' confession there is nothing that could injure any individual suspected by the Government, the Lord Advocate maintained that Carstares had replied to the questions put to him, in the knowledge that his answers would be brought up against Baillie personally. Even for those old days of high-handed justice, this episode is of the darkest and foulest description. Honest men were ashamed of it. When Carstares appealed to the Council to remove the stain cast on his honour, the wrong was admitted. But nothing was done till the Revolution was accomplished. Then Carstares had the satisfaction of having his petition for justice granted. All the records against him were ordered to be erased, and Parliament declared that he had been "highly injured, contrary to the public faith." Carstares comes out of the trial free from the charge of meanness or of cowardice. As he himself said :—"I had rather die a thousand deaths, than be a witness against any that have trusted me." And Dr John Watson was right when he gave it as his opinion, that "Carstares' life was too valuable to be thrown away, through the mere determination of physical courage" (*The Scot of the 18th Century*).

Carstares was set at liberty after an imprisonment of two years. He resolved to leave a land that had been so cruel to him, and seek once more the shelter and peace of Holland. Before settling on a permanent place of residence, he took a tour through a part of the Netherlands, and finally fixed on Cleve, whither in August 1685, he brought his wife from England. His mother's death in the same year, was followed in February 1686, by his father's death. True to his firm conviction, the old man sent a farewell message to his son, enjoining him never again to meddle with politics. A few months later, he removed his home to Leyden, partly to be near old friends, and it may be, to be in closer proximity to the Hague and the Prince of Orange. While living at Leyden he attended the University and took an academic degree. In Peacock's *Index of English speaking Students who have graduated at Leyden*, the entry is to be found :—"Carstars Gulielmus, Scotus, Verbi Divini Minister, 21 October 1686."

William of Orange, too, in recognition doubtless of his faithfulness under torture, admitted him to terms of great intimacy with himself and made him one of his chaplains. He appointed him, likewise, in 1688, to be the second minister of the Scots Church at Leyden, which was known as the Begyn Chapel. The stipends attached to these posts could not fail to be acceptable to the exiled Scot.

In England, matters only grew worse. The darkness was deepest before the dawn. The story has been too often told to need repetition. No other course was open to the people than to throw off the burdensome yoke of James, and offer the crown to his daughter and her husband. William quickly responded. At Torbay, where the Dutch troops touched the English shore, Carstares, who had crossed in the same ship as his royal master, conducted an impressive thanksgiving service. The march to London and the welcome to the Prince quickly followed. Carstares was with him at every step.

It is with Scotland, however, that Carstares' work is chiefly concerned. William was a stranger to the northern part of his new dominions, and could not understand the intricacies of the situation without the counsel of one who knew it well. Again he leaned on his favourite chaplain. The Prince of Orange was a man of strong independent judgment, whose desire it was by a wise toleration to knit together all parties in Church and State. Carstares' influence, too, made for a smooth settlement of the many sharp-cornered problems which presented themselves in the land of his birth. "Pray," he says to his brother-in-law, Dunlop, when uncertain whether he could be present himself in Edinburgh at the first Assembly in October 1690, "endeavour that things be moderately managed." Without delay, the appointed commissioners offered the crown of Scotland to William and Mary, who, in accepting it, repeated with uplifted hands, the coronation oath. Carstares received a royal chaplaincy, to which the king attached all the revenues of the Chapel Royal. A suite of rooms, set apart for him in Kensington Palace, further marked the favour of William, who was pleased to order Carstares' "constant attendance on his person."

The task of Carstares, as adviser of the Crown in Scottish ecclesiastical affairs, was extremely difficult. Contending parties in the Church were eager for the acceptance of their

own views. To some Carstares seemed to be lax; others thought him too stringent. One course alone was possible with regard to the Church. Episcopacy, as the established form of religious worship, was doomed. It had been weighed in the balances by the Scottish nation, and by them as a whole found wanting. The Revolution Settlement brought in Presbyterianism once more, after an eclipse of twenty-eight years. The courts of the Church took no direct part in the matter. Everything was arranged by Parliament, but the country had shown, in a most unmistakable way, its favour for the system set up by John Knox and ratified by the Act of 1592. With the abolition of Episcopacy, patronage took its flight.

At the Assembly of 1690, Carstares was in constant attendance. He could not take part in its debates, as he was not a minister of the Church, but we shall not be wrong in supposing that behind the scenes he was the great guiding force, in touch at once with the Church and the king. Indeed, so integral a part did he play in all these negotiations, that he was called Scotland's Viceroy, and at court was known as "The Cardinal." In dealing with the Assembly, he carried out his own advice to Dunlop in support of moderation. It was his hope that Episcopalians, during this time of re-adjustment, without giving up their private belief in prelacy, would be willing to stay and would be permitted to stay in the National Church. Some of them indeed accepted the new order of things, and worked faithfully by the side of their Presbyterian brethren. Laurence Charteris is a conspicuous example. But in the long run it was found that compromise, even in a temporary arrangement, could serve no real end. The steadily increasing favour shown by the Episcopalians to the Jacobite cause, and their stern adherence to their own view of church government, made reconciliation impossible. The aim of Carstares and his king was good—to have a comprehensive Church in Scotland, in which divergent views might exist together in harmony, till time brought about a true union; but the elements were too antagonistic to admit of such a happy amalgamation.

In 1694 a very delicate situation arose in the Church, from which deliverance came, we are told, by the boldness of Carstares. His conduct, the story of which even Mr Hill Burton admits to be true, though he looks on some of

the details as being tainted with romance, is apparently too well corroborated to allow of any doubt about its occurrence. Carstares had been absent for a time from the court of William. Other counsellors from Scotland managed to persuade the king to alter his policy. Lord Tarbat and the Master of Stair were the chief among them. They so influenced William as to make him pass through Parliament the Oath of Assurance, by which William was to be acknowledged king *de jure* as well as *de facto*. This oath, moreover, was to be imposed on all ministers as a condition of holding office. By both parties in the country this proposal was wrathfully resented. The Presbyterians looked upon it as flagrantly Erastian, while the Episcopalians saw in it an attempt to make them deny the hereditary right of the Stewarts to the throne. In furtherance of his policy, the king called a General Assembly, and ordained that the ministers should subscribe the oath before being allowed to take their seats. Excitement was intense, for the king had likewise given authority to his Commissioner, Lord Carmichael, to dissolve the Assembly if compliance was not granted. Carstares was appealed to. The Commissioner, knowing the high feeling engendered, sent an express to William, laying before him the facts of the case, and suggesting the withdrawal of the measure. The king peremptorily refused, and ordered his wishes to be carried out. The messenger was about to depart on his way to Edinburgh. Carstares arrived, and at once proceeded to the messenger's house. Then using the royal name, he obtained delivery of the document. It was night. William had retired to rest and was asleep. Carstares gained access to his chamber, and kneeling by the bedside, awakened the royal sleeper. " What is it you seek ? " demanded the king. " My life," was the reply. And then, begging his master to hear him speak, he told the story of what he had done, and the reason of his most strange conduct, till all anger fled from the heart of the king, who now saw the folly of his action so clearly that he bade Carstares burn the offending paper, and draw up a new order pleasing to himself. The fresh deed arrived in Edinburgh, just at the critical moment when the Assembly was about to be convened. The problem was safely and courageously solved. Carstares braved the king, not only because he loved his Church and country, but also because he knew as well the fairness of the king's heart.

But though this dramatic incident seems to be so well authenticated that it can hardly be set aside, another version of King William's change of mind is given by Rev. John Bell of Gladsmuir, in the "Passages of his Life" (*Wodrow MSS.* lxxxii. 4to). Referring to the critical position of affairs in the Church at the time, consequent on the royal decree, he says:—"To be sure Portland, Johnston and Carstares, who knew the perplexity of their friends att Edinburgh, were not idle at Court to get a counter-instruction; but all their solicitations were to no purpose till Johnston at length with much resolution and bravery addressed the king one evening as he was going in his nightgown to his bedchamber, craving that his Majesty would allow him to write to the Lord Carmichael to proceed in the usual manner, till such time as his Majesty had the advice of his servants in Scotland anent what was law. To which the king giving way, Johnston sent an express to Scotland with orders to the Commissioner to proceed *more solito* in the Assembly, with this advice as from himself that if there were any ministers, members of that Assembly who have never qualified by taking the oaths, they should be dealt with to withdraw and go home, that so the Church's enemies might have no seen advantage against her.

"This comfortable message came seasonably to Edinburgh to the relief of the Church's friends, about four of the clock that morning before the Assembly sat down, being Thursday, 29th of March 1694."

It seems impossible to reconcile these two versions of the incident. M'Cormick, who tells the story in its well-known form in his *Life of Carstares*, drew his information from documents and from family traditions. But how are we to account for Bell, a most competent observer, as the "Passages" prove him to have been, saying nothing about any interview between Carstares and the king, and attributing the change in events entirely to Johnston, the Scottish Secretary? Bell, who died in 1707, at the age of thirty-two, shows himself to have been in close touch with the men and things of his day, and it is hardly credible that he should not have known the facts of the case. Possibly further evidence may yet be found to clear up the mystery. Meantime, it is enough to call attention to the striking circumstance that in an apparently most reliable contemporary document, Carstares' name is not mentioned

in connection with the solution of the difficulty of the Assembly of 1694.

Soon after it was constituted, this Assembly proceeded to take steps for the reception into the Church of all Episcopalian ministers who should apply for admission in terms of the enactment. Those who presented themselves were willingly welcomed. It is well to remember that during the twenty-eight years before the Revolution, there had been settled in Scotland a very large number of ministers who were upholders of prelacy. If they had all been ousted now, their places could not have been speedily filled. It was therefore advantageous to the country that men who entertained Episcopalian views should be willing to work under Presbyterian government, provided always that their doctrine was Protestant. So readily was this offer accepted that even in the year 1710, there were 113 Episcopalian ministers in the National Church, and 9 of these were permitted to remain, although they had not seen their way to take the required oath. In this respect, there is a marked difference between the Church of the Revolution and the Church of the Restoration. During all these negotiations regarding the constitution and work of Presbyterianism in Scotland, Carstares was the chief guiding influence. He served well both his country and his king. William seems privately to have wished the same form of Church government in Scotland as in England. The Jacobite leanings of the Episcopalians of the north made him see the futility of his aim. To the end of William's life Carstares retained his friendship. A little before his death, which occurred on the 8th March 1702, the king is reported to have said :—" As for Mr Carstares, I have known him long, and I know him thoroughly, and I know him to be an honest man." During his last illness, William gave his old favourite a gold ring containing a lock of his hair. It may likewise be noted in proof of the great intimacy between Carstares and his royal master, that he was in close attendance upon the king during his campaigns in Ireland and on the Continent. No one was more confidently consulted by William on all matters of home and foreign policy than the sagacious and far-seeing Presbyterian minister.

It was only to be expected that the death of William would make a change in the position of Carstares at the English Court. Anne's policy with regard to Scotland

did not run on the lines pursued by her brother-in-law. On her accession, the hopes of the Jacobites rose, while the supporters of the National Church began to feel that their legitimate privileges were likely to be tampered with. It was no mean cause for thankfulness that at this juncture Carstares determined to live among his own people, and be of what help he could to the Church he loved. Accordingly, while still in his prime, for he was only in his fifty-fourth year, he accepted the offer of the Town Council of Edinburgh to become Principal of the University, in succession to Gilbert Rule. Henceforth his permanent residence was in the Scottish capital.

Having been duly installed in office on the 3rd June 1703, he was likewise appointed Professor of Divinity. In this capacity his duties were not onerous, for he was not expected to lecture more than once a week. But additional work of a kind entirely different from that to which he had been accustomed came to him, when he was asked to undertake ministerial duty, first in the parish of Greyfriars, and then in 1707, in the High Church ot Edinburgh. One cannot fail to be impressed with the contrast, which must ever have been present to the mind of Carstares, between his position at William's court and his humble round of pastoral service among the sick and sorrowing, the erring and dying, under his charge. His father now would have rejoiced in the fulfilment of his wishes. For it is said of Carstares that "in his ministerial charge he was equally diligent and prudent, and applied himself with the greatest cheerfulness to the lowest and most toilsome offices thereof." As Principal on the other hand, he showed his old scholarship, when at the opening of each session, he gave an oration in Latin, so pure and classical, as to call forth the highest praise from every quarter. On such occasions, Dr Pitcairn was in the habit of saying that he could almost imagine himself in the Forum at Rome, listening to the masterpieces of the great Latin speakers.

In one far-reaching political movement, Carstares was looked up to with peculiar respect. In the negotiations for union between Scotland and England, his influence was acknowledged and his judgment deferred to by leading men in both countries. Even the government of the day admitted that his power in the Church could make or mar the attempt to bring his fellow-Scotsmen into integral

association with the southern kingdom. Present in the Assembly of 1704 as an ordinary member, he was elected by a majority Moderator in the following year. In accepting the Chair he introduced an innovation, which was adopted as a fitting custom by his successors in office. Up to this period, no set address had been given by the newly elected Moderator. Carstares made a formal speech. At the close of the Assembly, he commented on "the beauty of our harmony, the calmness with which our debates have been managed, the order which hath been in our proceedings, and the civil authority of the magistrate and the spiritual power of the Church embracing each other." On opening the Assembly of 1706, he preached from Psalm xlvii. 8. In the Church and throughout the country, opinion was divided on the question of a political union with England. Among the ministers there was a good deal of dubiety. In many parishes meetings for prayer were held. Carstares, in virtue of power given to him by the Commission, wrote letters on the subject to various Presbyteries. These had a healing effect. On the 6th March 1707, the Act of Union was signed by the Queen. So great was Carstares' influence felt to have been, and so successful his efforts in conciliating opponents, that immediately after the Union had been effected, an official meessage was sent to him from the Under Secretary of State in these words :—"I do assure you the Queen is very sensible of your services." At a private interview, too, to which he was summoned, her Majesty presented him with one of the silver medals, of which only a few had been struck, in commemoration of the great event. At the same time she thanked him personally for all he had done. When raised again to the Moderator's Chair in the Assembly of 1708 —a most fitting acknowledgment of his wonderful achievement—Carstares wisely made little reference to the fact of union, about which men's minds had been so divided.

In the Assembly of 1709, which met in St Giles on the 14th April, Carstares, as retiring Moderator, preached from Psalm cxxii. 9. In his sermon, according to Wodrow, he recommended charity "in dealing with those of the Episcopalian communion, who did not think it fit to join with us, and avoiding harshness and bitterness of spirit towards them." In Carstares the Assembly saw one who practised what he preached.

The lighter side of things in Carstares' strenuous life is

revealed in the younger Calamy's interesting sketch of his visit to Edinburgh. The two had met in Holland in the old days, and Carstares had often pressed his friend to come to the Scottish capital. He came during the sittings of this Assembly, and was a constant attender of its discussions. We find him saying :—" I was one day invited by the masters of the college to go with them to Leith to take a fish dinner, with which they were to entertain their Principal Carstares, according to annual custom. . . . I was extremely pleased with the day's entertainment and conversation. One thing that gave a peculiar relish, was the entire freedom and harmony between the Principal and the masters of the college, they expressing a veneration for him, as a common father, and he a tenderness for them, as if they had all been his children." Carstares' kindness to the poor was so great that before he returned home from a walk in town, he usually emptied his pocket of spare money. His friends eventually had to watch the amount with which he left his house, lest he should give away too much. He showed remarkable graciousness also to those Episcopalian ministers who were thrown out of their livings at the Revolution through refusing to avail themselves of the offer to stay in the Church. To some he even allowed an annual pension, without informing them of the quarter from which it came. On the day of his funeral, two men could not refrain from showing by their tears the loss they had sustained in his removal. They were Episcopalian ministers, whose homes had been brightened by the gifts of the Principal. It is interesting, further, to notice the testimony borne by Calamy to the influence wielded by Carstares in the Assembly :—" No man in the Assembly," he says, " was heard with more respect than Mr Carstares. He was commonly one of the last in speaking, and for the most part drew the rest into his opinion, when he thought fit to declare himself with openness."

The same authority gives us a striking instance of the grace and dignity with which Carstares conducted himself in the presence of his brethren when, as sometimes happened, his proposals were called in question. " A certain old gentleman," we are told, " asked Mr Carstares for what reason his opinion might not be of as much weight as another's. ' I, sir,' said he, ' am as good a man as yourself, bating that you have a sprinkling of Court holy-water, which I must own myself a stranger to and never affected

to meddle with. I tell you again, Sir, you shall withdraw or we'll go no further.'" On the point of order, the old gentleman was quite right, the Synod of Lothian and Tweeddale being parties in the case under discussion. Accordingly, Carstares "with great meekness made this reply :—'Dear brother, I can more easily forgive this peevish sally of yours, than you perhaps will be able to forgive yourself, when you come sedately to reflect upon it,' and so withdrew. The matter was soon determined with a *Nemine Contradicente*; but this angry old gentleman afterwards could not rest without asking Mr Carstares' pardon."

Only a passing reference can be made to Carstares' action in regard to the Act of Toleration, by which liberty was given to Episcopalians to hold services according to their own views. The matter became pressing through the institution by an Episcopalian minister named Greenshields, of such services in Edinburgh in 1709. The intimation of the intention of the government to pass such an Act, perfectly right in itself, was looked upon with misgiving by many in the Church. For it had a political bearing. The Jacobites rejoiced in it, because they saw in it the possible means of damaging the Church now established, and so lessening the opposition to the return of the Stewarts to the throne. Accordingly, though Carstares with his wide experience and calm judgment, felt that any action taken by the Church against the passing of the bill into law, would be ineffectual, he was willing to go to London with other delegates, and represent the fears which many entertained with regard to it. Their efforts were unavailing. The Act of Toleration was passed. It was certainly grievous enough in the eyes of a considerable section of the National Church, but their exasperation was increased tenfold by the mischievous addition made to it in the form of the Oath of Abjuration. Again Carstares advocated patience. He knew that the fresh cause of vexation would not continue for any length of time. As a matter of fact the Oath was modified by George of Hanover in 1719. The choice made of Carstares by the Church to interview the Government in connection with the proposed legislation, was due not only to the position of leader which Carstares enjoyed with almost unanimous consent, but also to the fact that in the immediately preceding Assembly—that of 1711—he had for the third time been raised to the Moderator's Chair.

Another subject of even greater importance to the Church began at the same time to engage public attention. For the rumour had also spread that the Queen's advisers were purposing to re-introduce patronage, which the Scots Parliament of 1690 had abolished. Every student of ecclesiastical history knows the result. Carstares and his fellow-deputies did all in their power to keep the Government from altering the Act, but in vain. On the 22nd May 1712, by the signature of Queen Anne, the old system of patronage was grafted on once more to the ecclesiastical organization, and as many a sad page in Scottish history tells us, became the direct or indirect cause of disagreement and dispute in that house of God, in which peace and goodwill only should reign. No blame can be attached to the Church of 1712 for its re-imposition. Carstares failed to prevent it. When he was defeated, who could have succeeded ?

An amusing touch is given to the picture of the efforts of the deputies in London by Professor Blackwell of Aberdeen, who, along with Robert Baillie of Inverness, accompanied Carstares. "Our joints," he says, "have been almost pulled sundry with driving in hackney coaches through all corners amongst our great men for some weeks ; to be free of which, at other times I have often walked, till I was scarce able to step farther, so that they have allowed no English beef to grow upon my bones."

On the 17th April, Carstares left London in order to open the Assembly of 1712 on the 1st May, when in St Giles he preached from Proverbs xxiii. 23, "Buy the truth and sell it not." Of his sermon, which breathed that spirit of calmness, which had often served the Church so well, Wodrow only says :—"There was little in it on the present position of things." Again the wisdom and influence of Carstares were seen. He knew well that recent legislation affecting Scotland had been carried by the opponents of the Presbyterian Church, and that nothing better for their purpose could occur than disunion in the Church and disagreement with the Crown. But both the Queen and her ministers were astonished at the peaceful temper of the Assembly, which sat after these disappointing Acts of Parliament were passed. Still further testimony is given to the unique position held by Carstares, in a letter from the Earl of Oxford, who asked Carstares to suggest the name of a suitable Commissioner to represent the Queen at the Assembly of

1713, and to give the outline of an acceptable letter to be read in her Majesty's name.

The question of the relation of the Church to the Abjuration Oath called for all the statesmanlike qualities of Carstares. Feeling ran high on the point. He pled for moderation in the interests of the future, as well as of the present. In this he carried the greater portion of the Church and the people with him. A minority indeed refused to take the oath. The English Episcopalians in Scotland conformed, but the Jacobite curates stood out against it and became known as Nonjurors. Within the Church some curates—to keep up the name commonly given to them—stoutly refused to swear. On Carstares' counsel it was agreed by Act of Assembly that both parties, Jurants and Nonjurants, should "live in love and Christian communion together . . . and carefully refrain from reproaching one another, on account of the said different sentiments and practice." No wiser measure, surely, was ever passed.

Carstares now began to feel the weight of years and the need of rest after all his arduous toil. His duties required his presence in Edinburgh only during the winter months, but the summer found him usually in England, and mention is made of visits paid by him to Bath and Scarborough. On the 1st August 1714 the queen died, and on the 5th, George of Hanover was proclaimed king in the Scottish capital. The commission of Assembly appointed Carstares and four other ministers to convey the assurance of the Church's loyalty to the new sovereign. George continued Carstares as royal chaplain.

In 1715 the Assembly did itself honour by inviting Carstares for the fourth time to preside over its deliberations. A wise leader was required. The smouldering embers of rebellion were beginning to kindle into a flame. It behoved the Church in the interests of Protestantism to be loyal. In Carstares, firmness was duly mingled with forbearance, and the address to the king was unmistakable in its zeal for the establishment of his rule. His strictness was shown in the deposition by decree of Assembly, of two ministers from the north, who had refused to keep the day of thanksgiving for the accession of George, and had never prayed for him. Carstares addressed them solemnly from the Chair, and removed them from the ministry. We can imagine, too, with what feelings of exaltation, the fathers

and brethren of the Church, as they realized how all their fears were dispelled by the national welcome given to Britain's new Defender of the Protestant Faith, poured out their hearts in gratitude to God, in the song of praise their loved leader asked them to sing ere they parted—

> "Ev'n as a bird
> Out of the fowler's snare
> Escapes away,
> So is our soul set free ;
> Broke are their nets
> And thus escaped we.
> Therefore our help
> Is in the Lord's great name
> Who heaven and earth
> By his great power did frame."

Carstares' end was near. At Wodrow's request he drew up an account of his prison experiences in 1684 and 1685. This was almost the last piece of work he did. More than one attack of apoplexy seized him. On the 28th December 1715, in the sixty-seventh year of his age, he passed away. On the 2nd January he was buried in the churchyard of Greyfriars, the resting-place of so many of Scotland's sons, who have helped to make history both in Church and State. Among them all there could hardly be named a greater than William Carstares.

It has sometimes been debated whether the policy of Carstares contained in germ those principles of moderatism which showed themselves in full development at a later period. Possibly it is difficult to free the mind from a certain amount of bias in coming to a conclusion in this matter. But the following questions may be pertinently asked. Would Carstares have thrown the Erskines out of the Church? Would he have appointed Riding Committees? Would he have agreed with Principal Robertson in forcing Presbyterians to ordain men judged to be unsuitable? Would he have opposed the motion in favour of Foreign Missions in the Assembly of 1796? To these questions it seems possible only to give a negative answer, in support of which the glimpses Carstares presents to us in his private letters of his own inner life may be brought forward. Here, for instance, is what he says to his wife, when in prison in Edinburgh:—"[God] is my hope and strength, and in His infinite love and mercy in Christ I trust." "O, what reason I have to love Him, and be faithful to Him,

who is so tender of such a wretch, of one so unstable, unthankful and unholy. Were not His mercy in Christ infinite, I should be undone, and had been so long ago. Blessed be God for ever for Christ, in whom I desire to be found, and of whom I desire to walk worthy." "I must say, that this afternoon I have had some refreshing, particularly in Hab. i. 12, Mic. vii. from 7 to 10, and from 18 to the end; and Ps. xxvii. from 5 to the end, and Ps. lxvi. It may be He will make light to arise on my soul . . . though I confess I can see no way to be delivered; but He can deliver, when all refuge fails. He is my hope." These are but samples of his utterances. Their note is clear. The language is not the language of the Moderates, but that of the Evangelicals.

Mrs Carstares died on the 27th July 1724, in the seventy-seventh year of her age. She was buried beside her husband, "betwixt Alexander Henderson's tomb and the wall." Few facts are recorded regarding her. One incident may be mentioned in proof of her worth. After the torture to which Carstares was subjected, she obtained permission to be with him in his confinement. The *Records of the Old Tolbooth* state that on the 27th October 1684, she was allowed by the Privy Council "to be kept close prisoner with her husband" (*Scot. Journal of Topography, etc.*, i. 280). That, more than anything else, gives us a revelation of her spirit and character.

Carstares' writing, as shown in his extant correspondence, is of a peculiarly slanting, staccato style, as if he lifted the pen after forming each letter in a word. Possibly his hand had become cramped in writing by the terrible crushing it got in the thumbscrews. John Macky in his *Memoirs of his Secret Services* gives us a picture of Carstares not altogether complimentary. "He is," he says, "the cunningest, subtle dissembler in the world, with an air of sincerity, a dangerous enemy, because always hid. He is a fat, sanguine-complexioned man, always smiling, where he designs most mischief; a good friend when he is sincere" (p. 126). Bell of Gladsmuir thus depicts him:—"Mr William Carstares is a polite man and a first-rate politician; of a gentle spirit, and one that has abundance of excellent humour and can deliver his thoughts very handsomely on all occasions" (*Wodrow MSS.* lxxxii. 4to). These contemporary testimonies—the one from an opponent, and the other from a

friend—are valuable on account of the personal details they supply. We can think of Carstares in his later years as stout in build, with a high-coloured face on which there always rested a smile, and with a never-failing stock of humour which burst out into merry laughter.

Two portraits of Carstares exist. One is in the possession of the Dunlops of Gairbraid, who claim relationship with the great churchman. The other, by Aikman, hangs in the Senate Hall of Edinburgh University. A photograph of Aikman's painting is given as the frontispiece of this book.

It was hardly to be expected that one whose life was so busy could devote himself to literature, but the catalogue of the Advocates' Library attributes the following pamphlets to his authorship. They all deal with one of the great questions of the day, and were published anonymously :—

1. Some Queries humbly proposed upon the bill now depending before the Honourable House of Commons for a Toleration to the Episcopalian dissenters in Scotland, 1710.
2. The case of the Church of Scotland with relation to the bill for a Toleration to set up meeting houses and use the English service in Scotland, 1712.
3. The Scottish Toleration argued ; or an account of all the Laws about the Church of Scotland ratified by the Union Act, in a letter from a Scots gentleman to a member of Parliament, 1712.

In illustration of Carstares' spoken style, let two quotations be given from his Moderatorial addresses. In opening the Assembly of 1711, he said :—" We are not insensible that there are not a few that are waiting for our halting, and that methods have been used by some of those that are openly disaffected to the constitution of our Church, to make us uneasie and to tempt us to murmur ; and for gaining their ends they raised surmises that patronages were to be restored, well knowing what an important security to our Church the abolition of them is, and how great a value we put upon a law that delivered us from them."

In closing the same Assembly, he said he had his address written and would consult it as he should " find it necessary." He wound up in this way :—" And now, Reverend Brethren, there being no more business to come before you, as you

did meet in this Assembly in the name and by the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ, the alone King and Head of this Church, so you are now to part in the same name and by the same authority. As for the dyet of the next Assembly the good acts of her Majestie's Parliament have, according to our own desire, fixed it to be within the year, which may be if you think it fit, the first Thursday of May, being the second day of the month, and I conceive this place is most convenient for a National Assembly" (*Wodrow MSS.* xxxv. fol.).

Both addresses are characterized by reverence and dignity. The first is worthy of note because of its allusion to patronage, and the second on account of the ingenious way in which he associates the authority of the Crown in calling a new Assembly with the desire of the Reverend Brethren to fix a date for themselves.

Dr Story in his *Life of Carstares* gives two Latin elegies which appeared in connection with the death of the great leader of the Revolution Church. One of them, to which the initials, "J. K." are attached, may fitly close this sketch of his career :—

In Obitum Desideratissimi

GULIELMI CARSTARII

Academiae Jacobi Regis Edinburgenae Gymnasiarchae Elegia

Molli membra toro stratus cum mane jacerem,
Et premeret somnus, talia visa mihi.
Astitit ante oculos vultus suffusa nitentes
Edina luctu ; tristis acerba gemens.
Almaque flens Mater, riguos urgebat ocellos ;
Vixque sinunt lachrymae haec tristia dicta dare.
"Consilio qui nos, meritis qui saepe juvabat
"Occidit. Huic quis par reperiendus erit ?
"Temperet a lachrymis quis ferreus ? ipse maderet
"Democritus fletu, tristia fata sciat."
Et pallere mihi visa est ecclesia, obortas
Extincto tenebras lumine questa sibi.
Orbatamque suo fulcro titubasse putavi ;
Hos et lugubres hausimus aure sonos.
"Raptus abest is cui veri rectique tenaci
"Dulce solum patriae vertere dulce fuit.
"In patriamque redux qui effulsit lumine miro
"Nostri semper honos ordinis atque decus.
"Lilia marcescunt, perit heu ! flos saepe rosarum,
"Infelix lolium dum dominatur agris."
Latius hinc planctum serpentem gliscere vidi :
Regia maerore et tangitur ipsa domus.
Rus fremit, urbs plangit, deflentes lumine cassum,

Ipsas Pierides ingemuisse putes.
Excussus somno, lachrymis exclamo profusis,
" Carstarius magnus, proh dolor ! occubuit;
" Alma ducem Mater gemit hunc, hunc Scotia civem
" Luget ; et hinc planctus visus adesse mihi.
" Hujus ad exemplum instituant homines modo vitam,
" Aurea tu nasci denuo saecla putes.
" Tunc iterum colerent pax et concordia terras,
" His Astraea comes linqueret ipsa polum.
" Non ita distraherent infesta infaustaque clerum
" Schismata. Non fratrum gratia rara foret."

CHAPTER XI

WILLIAM WISHEART, MODERATOR, 1706, 1713, 1718, 1724 AND 1728

WILLIAM WISHEART was a son of the manse. His father, after whom he was named, was minister of Kinneil in the shire of Linlithgow. Wodrow gives an interesting account of the sufferings of the father in the cause of Presbyterianism, beginning with his imprisonment in September 1660, in the Tolbooth of Edinburgh. The straits in which his wife and children found themselves through the hard sentence passed upon him, are made clear by a petition which Mrs Wisheart presented to Parliament, and in which she speaks not only of the sad condition of her husband, but of the privations endured by her "numerous familie." It is gratifying to learn that Parliament ordained the stipend from the parish of Kinneil to be paid to her with all arrears. The birth of William seems to have taken place during those days of hardship, sometime in the year 1660. After an imprisonment of thirteen months, partly spent in Stirling Castle, the father was permitted to return home. From time to time in later years, he fell under the ban of the Privy Council. In 1669 Kinneil was united to the parish of Bo'ness. This act severed Wisheart's connection with it, and doubtless deprived him of the stipend he had been enjoying. After various vicissitudes, we find him taking up his residence in Leith, where on the granting of the Toleration in 1687, he gathered a congregation around him. Five years later he died. He was everywhere regarded as one who had suffered in a special degree in his earthly estate for his religious views.

It was among such trying circumstances that young William grew up. Only the outline of his early life is sketched for us. Imagination must be allowed to fill in the details. He received his higher education at the University of Edinburgh, to which we can picture him making his way every morning from his father's house, up the long exposed

WILLIAM WISHEART

road which now bears the name of Leith Walk. After a time he proceeded to Holland, staying at Utrecht, in whose university he enrolled himself as an alumnus. On his return from the Continent, he took the degree of M.A. in 1680.

Wisheart was not long in declaring his sympathy with the opponents of the Stewart policy. His attitude was so pronounced that in 1684, the Privy Council threw him into prison on the charge of denying the king's authority. His place of incarceration was known as the " iron-house." The charge brought against him was repudiated by Wisheart, who on the 5th May 1684, presented a petition to the Council, bearing " that having left his studies at Utrecht to come home and visit his aged and dying parents, upon some mistake he was put in prison as being one of those who deny his Majesty's authority, whereas he disowns these principles, and nothing is laid to his charge, craving that he may be liberate " (Wodrow, *Hist.* iv. 38). A favourable view was taken of his case, and his liberation was ordered as soon as the Lord Advocate should be satisfied with the genuineness of his profession, upon caution to compear when called. " The Advocate for some time neglected to report, and so he continued a considerable time in the iron-house, in no small trouble." Nearly a year elapses before his name appears again. The authorities declined to be satisfied with his plea, for he still remained in custody. A fresh report was brought up about him on the 5th February 1685. In it the statement was made that Wisheart had refused to take the test, and was accordingly ordered to be banished, with a number of others, to " his Majesty's plantations " (*ibid.* 199). On the following day, however, the king died, and the sentence was never carried out. Three weeks later, the Council " appointed him to be liberate upon his giving bond, with caution under 5000 merks, to compear when called." He was never summoned again to face the Privy Council. The days of his sufferings were ended.

Wisheart was no sooner in possession of license to preach the gospel, than the people of Leith who had gathered round his father, were looking out for a minister of their own, for seemingly the elder Wisheart was still regarded as a member of the Presbytery of Linlithgow. They made trial of the gifts and graces of the young probationer, and inclined, perhaps, towards him in a very kindly way because of his father's work among them, they invited him on the 24th

November 1687, to be their minister. The first and second charges at South Leith at the time were held by curates, so that it was not possible for Wisheart to gain entrance into the parish church of St Mary's. His sympathizers had been worshipping in a temporary meeting-house near the Sheriff Brae, and here on the 12th January 1688, he was ordained, the venerable Hew Kennedie conducting the service. On the 1st July, his call was formally approved by the parish, though final confirmation was only given to it by the Presbytery on the 6th Jaunary 1692. Only then, too, did he move from the meeting-house to the parish church. This step met with great opposition from the Episcopal section of the community, who tried by force to prevent Wisheart and his friends from gaining possession of the church. One of the curates by this time had been removed. The other, Charles Kay by name, was left as minister of the second charge. The story of the intrusion is graphically told by the Prelatic party. " The Presbytery, with the magistrates of Edinburgh and Leith, came 10th Aug. and required the keys of the church doors from the minister [Mr Kay] and neighbours, to which it was answered, that if they had any warrant from the Privy Council for that effect, or any remit from them to the Presbytery, authorizing them to proceed, they were ready to give obedience ; but none being produced, they thought themselves not obliged, the matter being still pending before the Council, and protested against any violent intrusion to be made by them, and for cost, skaith and damage, and for remeid of law. Notwithstanding whereof, the magistrates and ministers of the Presbytery, with a confused company of people entered the church, by breaking open the windows, breaking the locks off the doors, and putting on new ones, and so caused guard the church doors with halberts, rang the bell and possest Mr Wisheart of the church, against which all irregular procedure, public protests were taken." Having been introduced to the charge in this manner, Wisheart " came to the church next day, with a guard of halberts, and preached and after sermon took possession of the session-house, Mr Kay and his session being refused entry, the bailies declaring Mr Wisheart's the only legal session, on which Mr Kay took instruments " (*Fasti*, i. 101). In the interests of peace a mutual arrangement was made, by which " Mr Wisheart preached every Sunday forenoon in the

church, and his colleague every afternoon. On the afternoon of Sunday, Mr Wisheart preached in the meeting-house and on Thursdays they preached in the church and meeting-house alternately." Each minister presided over his own session. Divided counsels and government of this kind, however, could not be permanent. Only one issue was possible. The Presbyterians were the recognized ecclesiastical authorities, and accordingly on the 28th February 1693, the Privy Council declared the Presbyterian Session "the only legal session, and ordained Mr Kay's Session to deliver up the poor's box, all rights of mortification, utensils of the church, etc." Kay was deprived of his charge for non-jurancy in the following year, and thereafter Wisheart enjoyed the assistance of colleagues like-minded with himself.

The intense interest that was taken in the election of Wisheart to South Leith is shown by a letter preserved in Fraser's *Memorials of the Family of Wemyss.* It was written by Margaret, Countess of Wemyss, to Viscount Tarbat, and is dated Leith, 15th July 1692. In it she says:—"The occasion of my giving you this trouble is to inform you how the state of the calling a minister to South Leith is now contraverted. I shall in the first place entreat your Lordship to be pleased to read the petition, which will inform you better than I can do by a letter of this affair. Only this I will say, if Mr Wisheart is going to be sent away or rather forced away from this people, it will be the strangest thing ever done of this kind, for he has a call from the whole elders and magistrates of Edinburgh and Leith and from the major part of the heritors. And although there is a call for one, Mr Gray, to the parish of South Leith, yet this gentleman, Mr Wisheart, has much law and reason on his side, and the other, being a meer stranger to all this people, at least to most of them, it is impossible that my good friend Lord Tarbat can refuse so just a desire as to disown Mr Kay and his pretendit illegal session, and in your Lordship's favouring these poor people here with your concurring to Mr Wisheart's call, your Lordship will extremely oblige your most faithful and affectionate cousin, M. Wemyss.

Halyburton, in his *Memoirs*, gives us an interesting glimpse of Wisheart about this time. In 1699 a vacancy occurred in the second charge of South Leith. Halyburton received a call to be its minister. Wisheart with several elders

proceeded to the presbytery of Kirkcaldy to support the call. Halyburton had an invitation from the parish of Ceres at the same time, which he eventually accepted. He states, however, one reason which weighed heavily with him in regard to Leith. "The colleague," he says, "was most desirable, and one from whom I might learn much both as to preaching and discipline." His resolution to refuse the call from Leith, he frankly adds, caused "great dissatisfaction to the minister and people of Leith, who had been at more pains with me than I deserved" (p. 760). Wisheart evidently would have rejoiced to have Halyburton associated with him in his work, and the testimony which Halyburton bears to him, is no mean certificate of his character and worth.

Under the jurisdiction of Wisheart, the Session of South Leith exercised a careful supervision over the doings of people, who did not attend the ordinary services of the Church. Thus a minute of Session, bearing the date 14th January 1692, records the appointment of "ane elder and deacon, by course, to go throw ye toune each Sabbath day in time of sermon, forenoon and after, and to observe who are on the streets, or otherwise prophaning the Sabbath by drinking or otherwise, and to call the officers to goe with them." The office-bearers duly reported the results of their observation. On the "31st October 1700, Helen Taileyour being summoned, was called and compeared, and acknowledged her gilt of carrying kale on ye Sabbath daye in time of sermone. She was appointed to appear before the congregation, Sabbath next, to be rebuiked" (Irons' *Leith*, ii. 133).

During the time he was in Leith, Wisheart seems to have been greatly incommoded in his home life by the failure of the session to provide him with a suitable house. Relations between them were somewhat strained. The following extracts from the records make this apparent. Under date 24th December 1691, we read :—"On Monday last, ye Comittee met and appoynted ye thes^{r}. to deburse any expenses he shall be at in suspending Mr William Wisheart, who has arrested ye rents of St Anthons for 100 pound yearly, payable be ye session to him for a manse in this place." This action of the minister aroused a good deal of opposition. On the 30th March 1693, it is said :—"The minister represented to the Session yt seeing ye business

of ye 100 lib. payable to him for a manse, occasioned as much clamour in ye toun, he was firmly resolved to pass it in tyme coming, but craved he might have a manse provided for him." This the session agreed to do, but for some reason they failed to carry out their bargain. In August 1696, Wisheart felt it necessary to bring the matter up again, representing to the session that "these two years past my body is now brought under severall infirmities by reason of the coldness and insufficiency of the house I have lived in with my family these three years past." Nothing however was done, and apparently no manse was provided for the ministers of South Leith until 1846 (Robertson's *South Leith Records*).

Like many other ministers, Wisheart was favourably impressed with the prospects of the Darien Scheme, launched by William Paterson, founder of the Bank of England. Leith was specially interested in the expedition, for from its harbour on the 26th July 1698, sailed the four frigates carrying their freight of 1200 men, "of whom 300 were gentlemen." Wisheart, doubtless, was present on the shore to see the vessels weigh anchor and proceed down the Firth on their disastrous voyage. In the expedition he was interested pecuniarily, for into the scheme he put £200, not a penny of which he was to see again.

During his ministry in Leith, Wisheart grew in esteem not only among the people of the seaport town, but throughout the whole Church. He holds the high honour of having been called to the Chair of the General Assembly on five occasions. His first summons came in 1706, the year before the Union. His predecessor in office was Carstares. The Assembly met on the 4th April. It is not within our province to mention the views of the various parties in Church and State on the question of an incorporating union with England. Fear of the consequences of union dwelt in every section of the community, Presbyterian and Jacobite. The only whole-hearted supporters of it were the Court party. The position of the Assembly was delicate, and it needed at its head a man of calm judgment and ripe wisdom. That Wisheart, at the age of forty-six, should have been placed at the helm of affairs in such a crisis of the nation's history, is commanding testimony to his influence and ability. The way in which he managed the business of the Church during this year of office, abundantly justified

the confidence reposed in him. His labours were crowned with success when on the 16th January 1707, there was passed by Parliament, the "Act for securing the Protestant Religion and Presbyterian Church Government," which formed the basis of the Treaty of Union. Very high praise is given by Defoe, in his *History of the Union*, to Wisheart for the part he played in controlling the discussions which took place in the Assembly, while he occupied the Chair. "Nor should I do justice here to particular persons," he says, "if I did not acknowledge and record it to his honour, that much of [the good spirit and attitude of the Church] is justly due to the prudence, patience and temper, of the Rev. the Moderator, Mr William Wisheart, then minister at Leith, who was Moderator of the Assembly and also of the Commission, and who acted the true Moderator in all these disputes wisely, calmly tempering, and with difficulty enough reducing the warmest debates to a method of conclusion, and I must own he had a task of no small difficulty. And this remark of mine is more just, in that I could not but observe that the debates on these affairs had sometimes that unhappy warmth, that they seemed to tend necessarily to a breach, and to come to the very point, and lookers-on, of whom I was one, with sad heart expected something fatal, not to the Union only but to the whole Church, must unavoidably have followed every debate; and yet we always found cooler thoughts prevailed, and wise men yielding this way and that, continually maintained a harmony in concluding whatever there was in debating" (p. 262).

A letter from Wisheart to Wodrow, dated the 28th January 1715, throws some light on the efforts made by various parties to dissolve the Union. Even many Presbyterians were wishful to return to the old state of things. The Jacobites tried to get up a public address to the king, advocating the repeal of the Union, and they sought to gain for it a general support throughout the country. It is to this scheme that Wisheart refers in his letter to the minister of Eastwood. "The Jacobites' address," he writes, "was certainly contrived for raising a ferment in the spirits of those well affected to the present Government and constitution, and creating differences and animosities among honest people, and in the issue to alienate the affections of people from his Majesty's government; in a word, it was a contrivance fitted for doing execution, turn whatever

way it would. But, blessed be God, who hath in a great measure broken that design, both here and in other places. The advocates here [Edinburgh] in their annual meeting, had a tough debate about it, but at last it was by vote thrown out of doors" (Wodrow, *Corr.* ii. 19). When the Rebellion of 1715 came to an end, a day for national thanksgiving was appointed, the date fixed being the 7th June 1716. This day was generally observed by Presbyterians. A few, like James Webster of the Tolbooth Church, refused to observe it. In the Tron Church, to which Wisheart by this time was translated, a service was held on the occasion. Wodrow lets us know that some of the congregation sympathized with the Pretender. "On the thanksgiving day," a friend wrote him, "these verses were put into the Tron Church lettering [precentor's desk], and the Lady's [? laddies] who put them in secured—

"Did ever people play such pranks—
To murder men and then give thanks!
Stop, preacher, hold and go no further,
God will accept no thanks for murther."

Ibid. ii. 167.

The city of Edinburgh could not help casting envious eyes upon the port of Leith, and its magistrates when looking out for a colleague to George Meldrum, on the resignation of William Crichton, invited Wisheart to come to the Tron Church. The appointment was made on the 1st October 1707. The nearness of his sphere of labour to the capital allowed the city fathers to become well acquainted with the capabilities and work of Wisheart. At the same time, he had already given public proof of the spirit of his ministry, by issuing two sermons through the press, one on Psalm cxix. 24, preached before Parliament on the 1st December 1700, and published in 1701, and the other on 1 Tim. vi. 20, preached before the Synod of Lothian and Tweeddale, on the 5th May 1702. He had sent forth also from the press, anonymously in 1702, *A Discourse on Suppressing Vice and Reforming the Vicious*, which shows that he was in thorough sympathy with the Society in which his senior colleague in the Tron had taken such a deep interest. His coming to Edinburgh, therefore, was a step calculated to strengthen the Church. Wisheart was in the prime of life. His record was notable. To his new charge, to which he was inducted on the 12th October, he was welcomed by the citizens as

well as by his congregation, with fond expectations which were amply justified. He continued minister of the Tron till his death.

Wisheart's election on five occasions to the Moderator's Chair has few parallels in the history of the Church. Only two of his contemporaries, William Mitchell and William Hamilton, received from their brethren the same high honour. It is hardly possible to tell at this distance of time, why each of these leaders in the Church was called upon so often to preside over the Assembly. There were other men who were able, and who had served the Church well, but they were all passed over. The fact that the vote so frequently inclined in favour of these three, proves that they were mighty men in their day, towering head and shoulders above their fellows. It will be convenient to notice together the various Assemblies which met under the presidency of Wisheart.

Mention has already been made of the Assembly of 1706. The dates of his other Assemblies were 1713, 1718, 1724 and 1728. Wodrow, in his interesting letters written to his wife while he attended the Assembly, often takes us behind the scenes, and gives us a vivid impression of the sayings and doings of the Supreme Court of the Church. The year 1713 was marked by great difference of opinion in regard to the Oath of Abjuration. Wodrow tells us that Wisheart was chosen Moderator because he was acceptable to many of the Non-jurors (*Ana.* ii. 194). It was a wise thing, therefore, to put him in the Chair, for it needed all the wisdom and calmness of one loved and trusted by the Church to prevent an open breach upon the question of the acceptance or rejection of the Oath. The Assembly of 1713 was memorable, because under Wisheart that difficulty was successfully overcome.

In the following year, Wisheart opened the Assembly as retiring Moderator, with " a very good sermon on 2 Kings ii. 13-14. He was longer than such sermons used to be, some more than three half hours." He took occasion to refer to " the heavy burden of patronages," under which " we were groaning," and " which was like to introduce a very unfaithful and corrupt ministry." He added a wise word of comfort, " that under the prospect of Jordan difficulties, ministers ought to reflect on, and support themselves from the Lord's former appearances in straits " (Wodrow, *Corr.* i. 549). For the Chair in 1718, four names were proposed,

but Wisheart was again chosen. One of his rivals was James Clark, a Glasgow minister of good standing. The proceedings at this election reveal a rather peculiar method of setting forth the qualifications of the different nominees. Mr Clark, it seems, spoke himself during the discussion, remarking amid the laughter of the house, " that he did not expect the *Chair*, and would lose his *seat*; and since they were not to make him Moderator, they might allow him to be *Clerk*, and that he was staged for error, and therefore was not to be on the leet" (Wodrow, *Corr.* ii. 375). The humour of the last jest is difficult for us to detect. Yet it shows that he was in no way sore on account of his rejection.

Little of special importance took place during the sittings of this Assembly, but Wodrow informs us that " a terrible flame" burst out, as great " as ever I saw." The matter is of interest, because it shows how even in those old days, strong feeling could be engendered over the doings of a Nomination Committee. The business was the election of the Assembly's Commission, the members of which were then chosen from the various Synods of the Church—the Synods being allowed to make their own selection. The Synod of Merse, according to use and wont, had made three nominations, but when the report came before the Assembly, it was found that the Committee had struck out one of the Synod's nominees and inserted a nominee of their own. The name they put in was that of Mr Ramsay of Kelso, who had been on the Commission for fifteen years already. On that account his local brethren had declined to send him up again. The Nomination Committee were invited to explain their action. They asserted they had the power by Act of Assembly to alter the lists. This was indeed the case; but the Border brethren were not satisfied. The Lord High Commissioner, stepping possibly out of his proper sphere, whispered to someone—was it to Wisheart?—that Ramsay was a royal chaplain and should be retained. In the end a compromise was effected. The third nominee of the Synod had his name restored to the list, and Ramsay's was added as well. Yet all this shows how careful Nomination Committees should be, lest as terrible a flame as ever Wodrow saw should break forth in the General Assembly.

In 1719, at the opening of the Assembly, Wisheart presided and preached from Psalm cxxxiii. In it " he very pathetically pressed unity . . . and proposed to the con-

sideration of the Assembly, whether it were not fit to explain and consider some parts of our excellent Confession of Faith," which, says Wodrow, "I did not so well understand" (*Corr.* ii. 444). Clearly, however, the retiring Moderator was hinting at some kind of Declaratory Act, which he believed the Church had power to pass in regard to its subordinate standard.

For the Chair in 1724, four names were proposed. In the final vote, Wisheart was elected by 105 to 65 in favour of Professor Hamilton. After his election, the Moderator made a long speech, the gist of which Wodrow sent to his wife, but M'Crie has not printed it in the *Correspondence.* "Considerable noise" was caused by the action of the Moderator in drawing up a reply to the speech from the Throne. Probably it was the custom to leave the matter in the Moderator's hands. At any rate, on this occasion, Wisheart drew it up on his own responsibility, and did not submit it to the small Committee appointed to frame it. The Earl of Seafield was Lord High Commissioner. The address referred in terms of high eulogy to his Lordship—"higher than usual," says the historian. This roused the indignation of many in the Assembly, who remembered the conduct of the Earl when last he occupied the king's seat. In the end the reply was altered, the ordinary phrases employed in such addresses being inserted in the letter. The Commissioner had the tact, when the letter to the king was handed to him, to thank the Assembly for the kind expressions used about himself. But the situation was an awkward one, both for him and the Moderator. Wisheart, however, seems to have been a little imprudent in the course he followed. In opening the Assembly of 1725, Wisheart preached from 2 Kings, ii. 12, "and insisted a little on the veneration elder ministers ought to have from younger, and made some pretty affecting remarks on the advantages this Church had at the Revolution from the old ministers then living, and then insisted on the doctrine he handled, that duly qualified ministers were the safety and strength of a Church and nation." On which Wodrow remarks :—"I wish he had taken in religious people, and his assertion would have stood in a fuller light, that the safety and strength of a Church and nation depended more on them than on armies, navies and councils" (*Corr.* iii. 192).

In the Assembly of 1728, Wisheart was once more

nominated for the Moderatorship. The doings of these old days in this matter are full of interest. The retiring Moderator, Professor Hamilton, named him, but at the same time he named two others as well. Accordingly, Hamilton did not nominate one member as his successor, but three as a leet from whom his successor might be chosen. A fourth was added. The final vote was taken between Wisheart and Smith of Cramond. By eighteen votes, Wisheart secured the honour for the last time. "The Moderator had his speech," we are told, "very long and very warm." At the close he referred to the "affair of doctrine"—the Simson case which was to come before the Assembly, and upon which he "assured the Commissioner that it was with much trembling and fear that the Assembly were to enter on that awful subject" (Wodrow, *Corr.* iii. 338). It is enough to say about this stage of the Simson case, that the Assembly, without a vote, continued the interim sentence which had been passed upon the professor in 1727, and by which he was suspended from teaching and preaching. The final verdict came next year. On intimating this sentence to him, Wisheart expressed the wish that "he might consider it, and that it might be sanctified to him" (*ibid.* 394). Wisheart's own position in relation to the Simson case is thus stated by Wodrow in his *Analecta*:—"In his last years he was very firm in the matter of the doctrine of the Trinity, and zealous in his opposition to Mr Simson's innovations, notwithstanding the weight of his two sons" (iv. 61). In connection with the controversy, Wisheart saw fit to issue anonymously a pamphlet entitled *A Short and Impartial State of the Case of Mr John Simson, as it came before the General Assembly of* 1729. To conceal the authorship of it more effectually, he took the precaution of publishing it in London.

It is interesting to notice that during the second Simson process, two of the four University Principals—Wisheart of Edinburgh and Hadow of St Andrews—opposed the accused Professor, and two—Campbell of Glasgow and Chalmers of Aberdeen—supported him. Cunningham in his *Church History of Scotland* makes a mistake in referring to this matter. He assumes that Hamilton was Principal in Edinburgh at the time, and states that three Principals favoured Simson and only one—Hadow—was against him (ii. 274).

During these years of public service in the Church, Wisheart was carrying on the work of a large city congregation. For the character of his ordinary preaching, we are able to draw from the pages of Elizabeth West, who on the Saturday of a communion at Lasswade in June 1695, heard him say :—"I fear there are many to-day here who are to begin their preparation-work." Then she adds, "I thought that word touched me very near. His text was Isaiah xxxiii. 17. 'Thine eyes shall see the King in his beauty.' He told us the King of glory would be there to-morrow; but he feared that many would be like the man that came a great many miles to see a race run, and when he came, he lay down the time it was running and fell asleep" (*Memoirs*, p. 21). Six years later, she writes :—"On Saturday our sermon was very sweet to me, but especially Mr Wisheart's on these words, 'My Son, give me thy heart.' He prest us to this duty, and gave many comfortable motives to persuade us" (*ibid.* p. 95). In 1702 she was once more at a communion in which Wisheart took part. This is her testimony. "On Monday, which was the last and greatest day of the feast to me, Mr William Wisheart was on Romans vii. 4, 'That ye might be married to one husband, even to Christ.' In this sermon he made great and large offers of Christ to all, even to those who slighted him; where my heart was made willing and content to accept of him on gospel terms" (*ibid.* p. 101). Some time after, Elizabeth listened to him again discoursing "on these words, Rev. iii. 11, 'Hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown,' where he exhorted us to hold fast in many particulars, but especially what we had received at this communion, telling us it was more difficult to keep what we had got, than it was to find it when lost. Which to my sad experience I know full well. But, among other things, he exhorted us to hold fast the profession of the Presbyterian government. At this I was glad to hear him so faithful, there being great need of such doctrine at this time" (*ibid.* p. 112). From these quotations it is abundantly evident that Elizabeth West found spiritual food to satisfy her hungry soul at the table spread by William Wisheart.

Along with his ministry at the Tron Church, Wisheart held for many years the Principalship of Edinburgh University. He received the appointment on the 6th June 1716. It must be recalled that at this period the office

of Principal carried with it the duty of lecturing once a week, at least, to the students of divinity. It was for this reason that until comparatively recent years, the Principalship of every Scottish University was held by ministers of the Church. In 1728 the University conferred upon Wisheart the degree of D.D. No doubt his modesty prevented the wish of the Senatus from being carried out at an earlier date. He did not, however, enjoy the honour long. The end of his strenuous life was approaching. Wodrow tells us that he had been "long tender," and was unable to preside at the opening of the Assembly of 1729. In another place he adds :—"The Principal is dwindled into nothing." He died on the 11th June 1729, in the forty-second year of his ministry. His wife, Janet Murray, of Prestonpans, to whom he was married on the 15th March 1691, survived him for fifteen years. His two sons, William and George, became ministers, and were both inducted in due time in succession to their father in the Tron Church. Both, likewise, were called to the Moderator's Chair, while William had the additional distinction of holding the Principalship of Edinburgh University.

Wisheart had two brothers who rose to high position in the service of their country. The one, George, who was in the army, was made a baronet, and acquired a large estate at Cliftonhall. The other, James, became a rear-admiral, received a knighthood, and, dying childless, bequeathed £20,000 to the Principal. This large legacy seems to have brought upon him the envy of some of his contemporaries. "The greatest matter of objection ever I heard made to him," says Wodrow, "was his too great exactness as to his brother, the admiral's, affairs, and too great narrowness" (*Ana.* iv. 61). The same historian takes notice of the high position reached by the three sons of the old minister of Kinneil, in spite of the losses the father sustained and the hardships through which the family passed. "His children came all to have vastly more than he could have given them, had he continued without trouble."

As a writer, Wisheart was fairly prolific. In addition to the three sermons published by him, and his account of Professor Simson's case, to which reference has been made, he issued several other pulpit discourses. On the 8th December 1706, he preached in Leith a sermon on Jeremiah xxx. 6, which he saw fit to publish. Its subject was the near

approach of divine judgment on the land because of its sinfulness. Various reasons for the nearness of the visitation of God he set forth with great plainness. "The time of judgment," he said, "is coming (1) because of the woful impenitency and incorrigibleness of this generation; (2) because God hath removed by death many blessed instruments of public good, who were as barrs to the execution of judgment; (3) because of the woful divisions amongst all ranks and degrees of persons; (4) because of the many sad woful distempers of heart that are this day among professors; (5) because of the dreadful security of souls; (6) because there are few that stand in the gap by their prayers to turn away wrath and judgment." This sermon caused considerable sensation. Accordingly, a few weeks later, he preached a second sermon from the same text, and published it because of the "reproaches wherewith the first hath been loaded." In it he retracted nothing that he had already said, but took occasion to point out the path which it would be needful for the nation to follow, in order to avert the judgment of God. Eight counsels were given by him for this purpose—(1) Break off your sins by repentance; (2) Make your peace with God through Christ; (3) Get a saving interest in and union with Christ; (4) Labour to get your interest in Christ cleared up to your own souls; (5) Be careful to get and keep a good conscience; (6) Be diligent in improving the glorious gospel; (7) Be much in prayer; (8) Put on the whole armour of God.

In 1714 he issued the sermon on 2 Kings ii. 13-14, preached by him at the opening of the Assembly. This was done "at the desire of many reverend and honourable brethren." In 1719 appeared his sermon, preached on a similar occasion from Psalm cxxxiii. Two years later, there came from his pen a series of five sermons, which he delivered in connection with the Lord's Supper. These sermons are full of wise spiritual counsel, and are most evangelical and practical in their teaching. A quotation from the second of them, entitled "A Persuasive to Preparation for the Lord's Supper," may be given, to show still further the character of his pulpit ministrations. The text is 1 Cor. xi. 27-30. The apostle, he says, "speaks of an evangelical worthiness and a worthiness of the action; and so to eat and drink unworthily is to eat and drink with a frame and disposition that is unsuitable to and unbecoming that holy ordinance. And

mark that he says—*this bread and this cup*, *i.e.* the wine in the cup, to shew that it is bread and wine still, even after the consecration of the elements. If the bread and wine were really transubstantiated into Christ's real body and blood, as the Papists absurdly plead they are, then the Apostle's argument had been stronger to have said, 'There is no more bread and wine here, but the real body and blood of Christ; therefore your unworthy carriage is a wrong done immediately to the person of Christ.' But he terms it *bread and cup*, and calls it so three several times. And why would he call it so often *bread*, if it were not bread?" (p. 26).

But Wisheart's largest work is of a more ambitious kind. It is his *Theologia, or Discourses of God, delivered in* cxx. *Sermons*, and published in 1716. The first of the two volumes of which the work consists, he dedicated to the Lord Provost and Council of Edinburgh. It treats of the Being, Incomprehensibility, Knowledge, Wisdom, Power, Holiness, Justice, Patience, Mercy, Truth, Eternity and Glory of God. The second volume which he dedicated to his two brothers, deals with such themes as—"Making the glory of God our chief end, God's Blessedness, God's Unity, The Trinity, The Decrees of God, Beholding the glory of God in the glass of the gospel, and Propagating the Knowledge of God." The two volumes form an extremely full and elaborate exposition of the doctrine of God, and must have given to his people a systematic acquaintance with Bible truth. Doubtless they are more suitable for students of divinity than for an ordinary congregation, but these one hundred and twenty sermons speak much for the diligence and ability of their author and the capacity of his hearers. Wodrow says that the *Theologia* is "reckoned a compend of *Charnock on the Attributes*" (*Ana.* iv. 61).

Bell of Gladsmuir thus sets down his estimate of Wisheart's spirit and character:—"He is a godly, grave person, a sweet and excellent preacher, and his life being of a piece with his preaching, he makes almost as many friends as there are persons known to him" (*Wodrow MSS.* lxxxii. 4to).

CHAPTER XII

JOHN STIRLING, MODERATOR, 1707

John Stirling was a son of the manse. His father, after whom he was named, was minister of Kilbarchan, whence he was driven by the act of eviction in 1662. Four years later, the future Principal was born. Two other sons of the family entered the ministry, but neither of them attained the fame or influence of John. Of his early career we know almost nothing; yet we may be sure that the exciting experiences of the household after they were forced to leave the old home, formed a frequent theme of domestic conversation, and impressed themselves deeply on the boy's memory. When his father accepted the Indulgence of 1672, John at the age of six, found himself for the first time in the Kilbarchan manse; and there he remained until the death of his father in 1683.

His mother, Jean Maxwell, possessed a heroic spirit. When her husband was enduring persecution, which told likewise upon her and her family, "William Taylour, one of the choicest Christians in all Kilmarnock," said to her, "Do ye not reu that ye married a minister?" "Indeed, no," was her quick reply (Mackenzie's *Kilbarchan*). Under the influence of such a mother, it is no wonder that Wodrow, who knew him intimately, tells us that Stirling came under abiding religious impression at a very early age. The mother lived long enough to see her son crowned with the highest honour in the academic world.

With a view to the ministry, Stirling entered upon his studies in Glasgow University, and from the Presbytery of Glasgow he received license on the 12th February 1690. His college career was therefore contemporaneous with the severest sufferings of the Covenanters and the stirring episodes of the Revolution.

One interesting reminiscence of his student days has come down to us. Stirling preserved a letter written to him by John Baird. It may now be seen in the Glasgow

University Library. In all probability, the writer was a friend of his father, John Baird, minister of Paisley. Writing to Stirling on the 4th August 1684, Baird gives him advice regarding his studies. He bids him read especially Dr Wilkins, the Bishop of Chester's *Ecclesiastes, or the Gift of Preaching*. He counsels him above all to let Scripture be his main and his daily study—" bonus textuarius est bonus theologus." Then he adds the good and homely precept, which we hardly expect to find in those old days—" Do not neglect your body, the soul's servant and handmaid."

After a year of probation, Stirling was called to Inchinnan, a rural parish with which he must have been quite familiar, as it lay only seven miles from the home of his boyhood. Here he was ordained on the 7th May 1691. He was not, however, allowed to remain long in the enjoyment of his quiet country pastorate. On the 6th December 1693, commissioners appeared before the Presbytery of Paisley in support of a call from Greenock given to young Stirling. The elders and heritors were unanimous in their request, but the minister of Inchinnan was by no means anxious to change his sphere. It redounds to his credit that he deemed himself unfit for the duties of a heavy charge. On indicating his wish to remain, the Presbytery on the 3rd January 1694, refused to translate him. Another call coming to him from Kilwinning at the same time, is further testimony to his qualifications as a preacher. But the Greenock people were unwilling to accept the refusal with which he met their invitation. In May, they tried again to secure him as their minister. Although Stirling continued to have doubts as to his fitness for the position, the Presbytery in the exercise of its rights, unanimously resolved to send him to Greenock. Certain matters, however, needed first to be attended to, and Stirling's translation was made conditional on the parishioners of Greenock carrying out two obligations previously imposed on them by the Synod. The arrangement may strike us as strange, but it is to be remembered how unsettled everything had been for years in the ecclesiastical world. The Presbytery declared that the " act of transportation is with this express provision, that the paroch of Greenock do legally and duly settle the stipend to the said Mr John Stirling, conform to what they undertook at the Synod of Irvine, and that they provide him with a sufficient

manse and gleib, at the sight of the Presbyterie." We can hardly wonder if the slackness of the people of Greenock to fulfil the Synod's finding influenced Stirling to remain where he was.

This difficulty was speedily removed ; yet Stirling continued to minister in Inchinnan, for we find the representatives of Greenock appearing again before the Presbytery on the 27th August, and intimating that though they had done their part, Stirling declined to come to them. On the 2nd September, he "subjects himself to the Presbytery," and agrees to go with this proviso, "that if he shall find that charge unsupportable, and grievances therein that he is not able to bear," the Presbytery shall grant him "freedom to go elsewhere." Even then, he could not bring himself to leave his first love. He craved permission, which was given, to continue to preach at Inchinnan for a time, in order "to settle that people, before he actually removes his residence from them."

This permission he interpreted rather more widely than the parishioners of Greenock thought proper. For, on the 28th November, a complaint was laid on the table of the Presbytery to the effect that Stirling had not come to live among them. The Presbytery allowed him "three Lord's Days further," and then peremptorily bade him go. Still possessed, however, with doubts of his own qualifications he "took instruments and declared that his going to Greenock is but only to take tryall of that charge, and that after some months' tryall he expects the Presbytery will ease him, according to their former act, if he find that charge unsupportable." But the patience of the Presbytery was now exhausted, and they dared him "at his peril" to delay any longer. He went, but was not at his ease. In a year he asked the Presbytery to release him, "on the ground of his unfitness for such a big charge, the distance from the Presbytery (taking him three days), and his weak health," but they declined to listen. Help was offered to him by the congregation in the form of an assistant, and a licentiate of the Church, Robert Millar by name, came, only to leave immediately on his appointment as minister of Port-Glasgow. After this Stirling worked on alone, till on the 18th September 1701, he left Greenock in order to accept the Principalship of Glasgow University. His friend Wodrow sums up in one pregnant sentence the character and fruit

of his work in Inchinnan and Greenock. "He was a useful minister, and had many seals of his ministry."

The letter in which King William presented Stirling to the University of Glasgow as its head, bears the date of the 8th May 1701. For the high honour thus conferred on him he was largely indebted to the recommendation of Sir John Maxwell of Pollok, who was Rector of the University at the time, and who was on close terms of intimacy with Stirling. But the delay which took place ere Stirling submitted his credentials to the University calls for notice, as it reveals once more that sensitive shrinking from prominent public work, which made him wish to remain in his quiet country parish rather than go to the busy, seaport town. In four volumes of MS. letters, preserved in the Glasgow University Library, most of which are addressed to Stirling by men eminent in Church and State, there are several which refer to his reluctance to accept the post. In his own neat handwriting, so different from that of most of his correspondents, Stirling on the 30th May 1701, expresses to Maxwell of Pollok his surprise at the appointment, tells him he is oppressed by the thought of his absolute unfitness for the place, and bids him "divert" the presentation, which is "crushing to me, as well as to the poor people I'm now concerned in." Pollok replied, presssing him to accept. From another letter in the collection, signed by Alexander Hastie as Moderator, we learn that the Presbytery of Glasgow wrote to him in the same urgent way, and sent two of their number to deliver the communication and enforce their desire. His own Presbytery, likewise, favoured his translation. All this is most honourable to the minister of Greenock, and testifies to the regard in which he was held, and to a widespread belief in his fitness for the high position. Stirling's scruples were set aside, and in due course he was formally installed in his new office.

In the *Munimenta* of the University of Glasgow, Stirling speaks of his appointment in the following interesting way :— "Mr Dunlop being removed by death, the 8th of March 1700, the Principal's place continued vacant till May 8th 1701, on which day his Majestie King William honoured me with a presentation to be Principal of this University, when with some difficulty I did accept of the presentation, having being procured without my desire ; yet not till the Presbyterie of Paisley, in whose bounds Greenock is, where

I was minister, did, *notwithstanding of great aversion signified by me*, loose me from that charge, and seriously recommend it to me to accept of the presentation, though I was sensible it was cross both to their interest and inclination, to lay so great a congregation as I then had, vacant. This, with other things relating to the affair, as it was then circumstanced, had such weight with my conscience, that I found myself obliged to accept of the Principalship ; and accordingly, September 18th 1701, I was admitted Principal by the then members of the faculty, after I had said ane inaugurall oration before them and many others in the Back Common Hall." Soon afterwards he received a mark of honour from the city of Glasgow. The *Burgh Records* inform us that on the 8th August 1702, he was admitted a " burgess and gild brother " of the burgh. At the same time it was agreed to " remitt his fynes and hold them to be paid, for good service done and to be done by him in this burgh."

Stirling did not find himself on a bed of roses during the twenty-six years of his Principalship. His troubles began early. For one thing, the finances of the University were not in a healthy state. His predecessor, Dunlop, had been somewhat careless in keeping the official accounts, and a Royal Commission which was appointed to look into the affairs of the college, authorized Stirling to begin a fresh ledger. Then Stirling did not get on very well with some of his colleagues. They blamed him for transacting business on his own responsibility without consulting them, and spoke of his peremptory manner towards them, while he showed partiality to the others. This is the view taken by Mr Coutts in his recent history of the University, and doubtless there is something in it. Yet it must be borne in mind, that during Stirling's tenure of office, the University developed in a most remarkable degree. Certain of the students, too, came into conflict with their Principal. They jeered at the habit of ejaculatory prayer in which he indulged. Rightly or wrongly also, doubts were cast upon his scholarship, and he was even charged with making many mistakes in his weekly Latin addresses. The antagonism towards him grew through the repressive measures he adopted in dealing with a section of the students, who were eager to act plays. This caused great excitement. Two entries in the *Munimenta* illustrate the feeling entertained against him. We read that on the 23rd April 1713, William Carmichael, scholar and

bursar, was "extruded," among other reasons, for calling the Principal "a greeting hypocrite." And on the 30th December 1714, Stirling informed the Faculty that three days before, he had confined a student, John Satcher, to the prison in the steeple, for writing to him an insolent letter. Some of Satcher's companions broke the door, and released their friend, who was ordered "to beg pardon and make acknowledgement in the Common Hall."

The friction which soon sprang up between him and some of his colleagues, did not abate in any wise as the years went on. By 1709 it had greatly increased. Professor Robert Sinclair, who held the Chair of Mathematics, was specially guilty of disloyalty to Stirling. Accordingly, the Principal found it necessary to inform the Faculty on the 27th December that Sinclair, when in London on a recent visit, had unjustly traduced him in relation to the distribution of the Queen's gift to the College. Sinclair, thus taken to task, acknowledged that he was in error, and offered to write to London and correct the false statement he had made. When in February 1710, it was found that he had failed to do so, he was ordered to fulfil his promise, but he resolutely refused. Whereupon "after the Doctor's contumacious refusal to write, . . . the Principal did admonish him before the masters for it." As Sinclair resigned at the end of the year, Stirling would not be without hope that sunnier days were about to dawn. In this he was doomed to disappointment.

All this sounds most disrespectful to the head of the College, and unworthy on the part of the students and professors concerned. Yet it is not possible at this late date to determine the just measure of blame to be meted out to the various parties in the dispute. The dissatisfied masters took a fresh step by rushing into print, and complaining of the Principal's management of the University funds. To this Stirling replied anonymously, in 1717, by publishing *Remarks upon a Paper intituled Grievances with respect to the Revenue of the University of Glasgow, offered to the Honourable Commission*, in which he made good his defence. A copy of these *Remarks*, apparently in Stirling's own handwriting, is preserved in the *Wodrow MSS.* in the Advocates' Library. The closing sentence runs in this way :—"Upon the whole, the Principal hopes that by what is now and likewise in the other answers represented, he hath so far as concerns himself

taken off the weight of the charge and complaint against him, particularly by Mr Forbes, and that it will now appear to the Honourable Commissioners that the Principal has not struck at the privileges of the University, nor assumed such despotick and arbitrary power intollerable to any free agent, who has any sense of liberty and property, as is alledged by the same Mr Forbes, nor been guilty of such mismanagements as he has been charged with by the other masters." Forbes was Professor of Law.

A still more serious matter, however, disturbed the Principal's career during this period. A bitter controversy arose about the right of the students to elect the University Rector. This source of disagreement, indeed, was an inheritance from Dunlop's time, for Stirling's predecessor had managed in some way to get the Rector appointed without consulting the students, who naturally felt aggrieved. The situation became more complicated, when the professors, opposed to Stirling, sided with the students, and demanded the restoration of their rights.

The method which had been pursued for some years in the appointment of a Rector was this. The Principal and professors made the selection, and calling a meeting of the students, expressed the hope that they would agree to their nominee. The plea they advanced in support of this somewhat arbitrary procedure was, that disorder was likely to be created if the students were allowed to go to the poll. Perhaps, as in more modern times, riots and horseplay had distinguished such occasions. Matters came to a crisis in 1717. From 1691, Sir John Maxwell had continuously held the office of Rector. Stirling and his friends were again in favour of him. The hostile professors and the students, who claimed their ancient right, nominated Mr Muir of Glanderstone for the post and elected him. In the end, a Royal Commission was appointed to determine the method of election. The students were debarred from taking part. On the 5th November, the Faculty met to vote. The majority of the Professors refused to elect. Stirling and the minority chose Maxwell. From the election in 1721 the students were again excluded, but on the next occasion, five years later, they were vested in their old right and exercised it (Coutts' *Hist. Glasgow Univ.*, p. 197).

In giving Sir John Maxwell an account of the proceedings on the 1st March 1717, in connection with the election,

Principal Stirling said his heart was so full that he did not know how to express himself. The opponents of Maxwell, he continued, had affronted the College and made it a reproach, while their unaccountable behaviour had given him the deepest wound he had ever received in connection with the affairs of the University (*Memoirs of Maxwell of Pollok*, ii. 366).

It is only needful further to say in connection with these disputes, that the students found a vigorous spokesman in James Arbuckle, who as a student in Glasgow had been in the thick of the fight. Arbuckle, after teaching in Belfast for a time, settled in Dublin as a doctor of medicine. He became a friend of Swift, who dubbed him "Wit upon crutches," in allusion to the lameness from which he suffered. In 1722 he published anonymously in Dublin, *A short Account of the late Treatment of the Students of the Un—— of G—w*, in which he poured the vials of his contempt upon the head of Stirling, whom he describes as a "very weak man, and utterly unacquainted with all kinds of letters." Wodrow tells us that Arbuckle was guilty of putting into his pamphlet "severall false facts and many false representations of matters," and this is probably pretty near the truth. Yet it is a little bit amusing to remember that Wodrow, in his desire to be impartial while speaking of his friends, did not hesitate to write in the *Analecta* regarding the academic appointment of Stirling :—"It is a pity that men of brighter parts, and that have had time to read and improve in learning, are not put at the head of learned societies. This was the great objection against Principal Stirling, and yet he had much solid learning, and knowledge of men and things." On the other hand, Bell of Gladsmuir, writing soon after Stirling's appointment to Glasgow, does not hesitate to say that he "acquits himself in that eminent post with applause, being active, prudent and pious" (*Wodrow MSS.* lxxxii. 4to). Yet in all these disturbances, Stirling must sometimes have longed to be delivered from the strain and worry of his uneasy position, and be back again among the green fields and homely folks of Inchinnan.

It was hardly to be expected that in the high state of feeling existing in the University, the Principal would escape ridicule in the lampoons to which the strife gave rise. One of these is preserved in the *Wodrow MSS.* in the Advocates' Library. It runs in this way :—

> "Stirling alone of all mankind is he,
> Who stands confirmed in all stupidity.
> Others to some faint meaning make pretence,
> But Stirling never deviates into sense.
> Some beams of wit on other souls may fall,
> Strike through and make a lucid intervall;
> But Stirling's genuine night admits no ray,
> His rising fogs prevail upon the day.
> Besides his goodly fabrick fills the eye,
> And seems designed for thoughtless majesty,
> Thoughtless as monarch oaks that shade the plain,
> And, spread in solemn state, supinely reign."

This, doubtless, would be enjoyed by his critics. It is of interest to us, because it conveys the information that the worthy Principal had a "buirdly frame."

If Stirling's relations to the students and to some of his colleagues failed to be of an ideal character, it must be fully acknowledged that he had the interests of the University at heart, and spared neither time nor labour to advance them. During his tenure of office, the teaching staff was practically doubled. When he accepted the Principalship, there were, including himself, seven professors. He added other six. Of these, three had been in abeyance for a considerable time, owing to the failure of revenue; the other three were new foundations. It was, indeed, his zeal in increasing the efficiency of the College, which provoked the anger of some of the original professors. "The multitude of masters and the opulencie of their sellaries occasioned them to turn into factions," says Wodrow.

But the institution of six new chairs and the provision required for them meant appeals to government, visits to London, and a vast amount of thought and correspondence. And so we find Stirling travelling to London and staying in the capital for months at a time, in order to prosecute his loved work. It is good to find that the Faculty appreciated his diligence in this matter, and presented him with an honorarium. On the 18th February 1709, they say:—"Considering the Principal had been in London from June to November last on the business of the University, and successful in getting the Royal grant for the salary of the Masters, agree to pay to him £3216 Scots." Five years later, Carstares writing to him from London on the 12th November 1714, urged Stirling to join him regarding "our" College gift. "It will," he says, "be best managed by yourself, and

it is not unworthy of a winter journey" (*MS. Letter in Glasgow University*).

In all this, Stirling served the University well. He achieved great things for it, and deserves to be remembered at the present day with grateful affection. Yet even towards the close of his career, and after he had made for himself this record, he did not meet with universal favour. In 1726 Wodrow tells us that there was some talk of getting the Principal to demit office. But sympathy with him was too genuine and widespread to let this movement gather strength. Probably he was already struck down by the illness which by and by proved mortal. In any case he kept his place till the end came.

For the good order of the College buildings and grounds, Stirling displayed a wise and careful concern. Thus he makes the following entry in the *Munimenta* on the 22nd September 1701, only four days after his installation :—" Finding the North side of the inner Closs of the Colledge without a Causey, and knowing that in the winter time it was like a puddle to the great inconveniency of the Students, I gave orders for causeying the same." Possibly the phrase " I gave orders," with its emphasis on the personal pronoun, gives us a hint of the reason why some of the Faculty charged him with being imperious in his administration of affairs. He was ready, likewise, to assist the civil authorities in such matters as the charitable relief of the poor. What the scheme was does not appear from the minutes, but on the 19th March 1714, we are told that the Faculty, on being informed that the magistrates wished to restrain begging, unanimously resolved to " stent " themselves. The Principal agreed to pay six-pence weekly, the Professor of Divinity the same, and the other professors fourpence. The bedellus was appointed to pay out to the poor, " who shall be recommended by the magistrates."

Though immersed in the multitude of details which came before him in connection with his College duties, Stirling found pleasure in preaching for his ministerial friends. To his chief friend, Wodrow, whose mother, Margaret Hair, came from Kilbarchan, he often went for the purpose of assisting him at communion seasons. " He was with me," says the minister of Eastwood, " at 18 or 19 communions." On such occasions, besides helping him in the pulpit, he talked with Wodrow about the great work in which he was engaged, on

the Sufferings of the Church of Scotland. Indeed, along with George Redpath, he strongly advised Wodrow to write at length the story of the Scottish Church from 1560 to 1688, but wisely this most painstaking of ecclesiastical historians regarded such an undertaking as beyond the powers of one man (Wodrow's *Memoir*, p. ix.). In May 1718, a year after he had been appointed one of the king's chaplains, Stirling preached before the Assembly and the Lord High Commissioner. Wodrow summarizes the sermon in his well-known *Correspondence*, and the epitome he gives of it may be suitably transcribed. It was evidently a sermon for the times, and dealt with the ever thorny question of the relation of Church and State.

" Yesterday, Principal Stirling lectured on Psalm lxxxv. and preached upon Col. i. 18, ' Christ's Headship over the Church.' He touched the supremacy of the civil magistrate, and refuted it, and signified that though the magistrate had a very great power *about* ecclesiastical matters, according to our Confession of Faith (upon which he enlarged, and gave some compliments to the King and Commissioner in common style), yet the magistrate's supremacy was found to be so near Popery, and only the change of the Pope, that when at the happy Revolution we cast out that, it was found necessary likewise to rescind the iniquitous laws made in the late times about the magistrate's supremacy " (ii. 377).

Stirling was much consulted by the leaders of the Church on all questions which pressed for solution, and his opinion was always listened to with attention. To the General Assembly, as well as to the meetings of Commission, Wodrow and he were in the habit of riding together. This custom they followed for seventeen years, and as they went three times a year full opportunity was afforded them of discussing affairs both in the religious and the political world.

It was during his early troubles in Glasgow that Stirling was summoned, in 1707, to preside over the Assembly. He was just forty-one years of age and had only been sixteen in the ministry The honour conferred upon him at such a comparatively early period in his life is an indication of his worth and ability, as well as of the respect in which he was held. The circumstances in which the Assembly met were peculiarly critical, and called for the exhibition by the Moderator of calmness, wisdom and strength. It was the year of the Union with England, and men's minds were

perplexed and divided over it. Every session discussed it. Many made it a matter of prayer. The Assembly, which showed its confidence in Stirling by putting him in the Chair, met on the 8th April, only a few days after the Articles of Union had been ratified by the Scottish Parliament. A few months earlier he had gone with Carstares and others to London, to watch the progress of events and to plead for the preservation of the rights of the Church. His letters at the time to his colleague in the University, Professor Wodrow, the father of the minister of Eastwood, deal with the situation, and reveal the anxiety he felt as to the wisdom of the Union, chiefly in relation to its possible effects on the worship and government of the Church. For he and others entertained the fear that the Presbyterianism of Scotland would suffer at the hands of Episcopacy in England.

Writing on the 28th November 1706, to the elder Wodrow, he says :—" The Parliament seems to be resolved, though all the world should be surprised, to push on the Union ; and nothing hitherto has damped their courage. I confess things have a fearful aspect. I pray light may arise out of darkness " (*Christian Instructor*, 1826). His conduct in the Chair of the Assembly met with the highest approval. After its meetings were over, and Union finally consummated, he went to London with other deputies to testify to the Queen the loyalty of the Scottish Church. His interview with Her Majesty was memorable. On the 12th August, he writes :—" I had the honour of kissing the Queen's hand yesternight. She received me graciously and thanked me for management at the Assembly " (Maidment's *Analecta Scotica* ii. 204). As the advisers of the Crown in England were watching, with some degree of solicitude, the proceedings of the Church's representatives in Edinburgh, we may regard the words which fell from the royal lips as abundant proof of the capable leadership of Stirling.

One great act passed by Stirling's Assembly was concerned with the Form of Process, in the drawing out of which " he had a good share." This piece of legislation, which was carefully considered by the Church for several years, and had passed the Barrier Act, was in a short time to have its effectiveness tested to the full, when it was levelled against one of the Principal's own colleagues on the ground of heretical teaching.

In the following year Stirling was commissioned, along

with Carstares, Robert Baillie and the Earl of Glasgow, " to wait upon the Queen and testify the Assembly's firm loyalty to her Majesty, and to congratulate her upon the merciful deliverance of her dominions from the late threatened invasion from France, and to thank her Majesty for her gracious promise to cause put in execution the laws against Popery, profaneness and other disorders " (*Acts of Assembly*, 1708). As this was the second occasion on which Stirling was chosen to represent the Church at the Court, it may be regarded as a fresh proof of the esteem in which he was generally held.

Stirling could not help having a good deal to do with the two cases in which Professor John Simson was the central figure, and which ended in 1729 in his suspension from the Chair of Divinity he occupied in Glasgow. The position of Stirling was rendered peculiarly delicate by the fact that Simson was married to the Principal's niece. Before Simson appeared in his defence at the Assembly of 1714, a conference at his request was held in Edinburgh, " in Mr Kello's house, vintner," attended by Carstares, Stirling, Hamilton and others (*British and Foreign Evang. Review, April*, 1884). Nothing came of the friendly discussion. In 1717, after a mild censure, Simson went back to his chair. Nine years later, the case broke out in a more serious form. At first, Stirling believed that the widespread rumours regarding the Arian character of his colleague's lectures were much exaggerated, and he did what he could to keep down undue excitement. In a letter to him from William Mitchell of the High Church, Edinburgh, dated the 22nd February 1726, we find it stated that a communication, recently received from Stirling, had " in the mind of many putt a stop to the gross parts of the reports " concerning Simson. At the same time, Stirling wrote Simson on the subject, and the professor duly replied. All these letters are to be seen in the MS. collection in Glasgow University.

But Stirling could not shut his eyes long to the negative character, if not to the actual unsoundness of his colleague's teaching. His heart was torn, however, between loyalty to the truth and interest in his relative. Wodrow intimates his decisive attitude towards the perplexing question in the words :—" He caryed most uprightly and faithfully in the present process against Mr Simson, and was by him, therefore, and his friends reconed his enemy." Personal relations

became greatly estranged between them, so that it is recorded that " the ungrateful treatment " he received from Simson, was " very grieving to him and indeed shortened his days." When the Principal lay on his deathbed, Simson " arrived from England 10 or 12 minutes before Stirling dyed, and was with him at his death, but," adds the historian pathetically, " I believe it was the Principal's happiness he did not know him."

The correspondence which Stirling carried on with public men was exceedingly large, and must have occupied a great deal of time. The four MS. volumes in Glasgow University contain 589 letters. Of these, only four came from the pen of Stirling. All the others bear the signature of well-known men. Some of them were written by Moderators of the Church, with whom these pages deal. There are two letters, for instance, from Simson of Renfrew, five from John Law, two from William Crichton, five from Professor Hamilton, seven from William Mitchell, and one from Ramsay of Kelso. George Redpath is responsible for eight, in some of which he uses cipher—a reminiscence of stormier times—while a good many are addressed to Stirling by Dr Daniel Williams of London. Barrington Shute discourses frequently to him on the vexed question of the Union, and the Dukes of Argyll, Athole and Montrose communicate with him on matters connected with Scotland in general or the University in particular.

But his most frequent and most interesting correspondent is William Carstares, from whom he received thirty-four of the letters. With the " Cardinal " he seems to have been on most loving terms. In the letter in which he congratulates him on his appointment to Glasgow, Carstares signs himself " your affectionate brother and sincere servant."

Mention may also be made of the great interest taken by Stirling in the religious condition of New England. Letters passed frequently between him and Cotton Mather of Boston. The friendship between them was cemented by Mather receiving, in 1710, the degree of D.D. through the good offices of the Principal. In order to aid the Church across the Atlantic, Stirling busied himself with a scheme to raise a sum of money for the use of the Colonists. In 1718, the Synod of the Presbyterian Church in the States awarded their thanks to the Synod of Glasgow and Ayr and to Principal Stirling for " their kindness to the interest of religion in these wilderness parts " (Gillett's *History*, i. 44).

Certain incidents in Stirling's life range themselves round the visit paid by the younger Calamy to Scotland in 1709. "While the Assembly continued sitting," says the English divine, "as I was one day walking with Principal Carstares in the High St. of Edinburgh, we met Mr Stirling, Principal of the College in Glasgow, who told me I must fix a day when I would accept of a dish of meat from him, when he would have no company, but such as I would nominate, as particularly agreeable to me to converse with. . . . I could not but be very thankful to all the gentlemen and to Principal Stirling in particular for giving me the opportunity of this conversation." Of his stay in Glasgow, doubtless at the house of the Principal, Calamy writes :—"Principal Stirling was my very good friend, and seemed from my first appearance there, to study to express his respect in all ways possible, in his own house and in all company." On leaving Glasgow on his return to England, he gratefully acknowledges the kindness of "the Masters of the College [who] were so complaisant as, most of them, to accompany me out of town as far as Hamilton." On reaching Hamilton, the Duchess invited the Principal and his guest to dine with her at the Palace.

Calamy's visit to Scotland on the invitation of Carstares, when he received honorary degrees from the Universities of Edinburgh and Aberdeen, as well as from Glasgow, was the occasion of temporary friction between Stirling and Carstares. In the diploma given to Calamy from Glasgow, reference was made to the honour he had received from Aberdeen, but no notice was taken of the action of Edinburgh. Carstares, jealous of the dignity of his Alma Mater, of which he was now the head, looked upon this as a slight. The ill-feeling was increased by the suspicion that Stirling had tried to impress his visitor with the superior attractiveness of Glasgow University over Edinburgh, in order that Calamy might direct English students, who wished to come to Scotland, to enroll themselves in Glasgow rather than in Edinburgh. An additional cause of dispute lay in the fact that Glasgow had conferred the degree of Doctor of Laws on Professor Cumming of Edinburgh, without consulting the Edinburgh Senatus. The result was that on the 28th May 1709, Carstares sent to his brother Principal a very sharp and testy letter, to which Stirling replied in the following terms :—

"I could answer the charge so as to satisfy the impartial and the unconcerned, yet it is in terms so high and so far from the Rev. Mr Carstares' usual strain of temper, that I think it advisable for me to make no particular return at this time, lest I should fall into expressions which you might no less challenge, but I shall be willing when the heat is over to subject the angry expression of yours to your own review."

This letter, full of calm dignity, certainly leaves Stirling the victor in a contest from which Carstares, forgetting for once his habitual courtesy, had to retire defeated.

Little is known of Stirling's domestic life. Few references occur to his wife. Carstares usually sends a kindly greeting to her. When writing from London on the 12th August 1707, Stirling says :—"I left my wife last week at Bath." Mrs Stirling, whose maiden name was Elizabeth Stewart, survived her husband for eleven years (*Commiss. Records of Glasgow*).

Stirling did not issue any work through the press. A number of his University addresses in Latin, together with the prayers offered in the same tongue, have been preserved by the faithful Wodrow, and may be examined in the Advocates' Library. The addresses begin with the salutation—"Magnifice Rector."

The Principal's death took place, according to Wodrow in his *Analecta*, from paralysis "after a long and languishing illness on the 28th or 29th September 1727" (iii. 444), though elsewhere he says, "in the beginning of October." The Synod of Glasgow, which met on the 3rd October, the day of his burial, adjourned in order to attend his funeral to the High Churchyard. The University took its fitting part in the last offices paid to its leader, who had always sought what he believed to be its highest good. In the *Munimenta* under date, the 12th January 1728, we read that an account for £3, 10s. stg. for "making a suit of clothes for Thomas Young, bedel, on account of the Principal's funerals was approven." Another account for the janitor and others, and for the cover of the Primar's seat, amounting to £12, 19s. 11d. stg. "was left on the table." No monument marks the Principal's place of burial.

Stirling was a man of some means. After providing for his widow, he bequeathed 10,000 merks to his brothers' children. To the College Library he gave his books and £2000, and to the Society for Propagating Christian Know-

ledge, £1000. To the Town Council of Glasgow he entrusted £100, the interest of which was to be paid to two ministers for preaching annually two sermons, the one against Popery and the other against Socinians and Arians. He remembered the poor of all the places in which he had lived. Thus, £100 came to the poor of Glasgow, £100 to Kilbarchan, 200 merks to Inchinnan, and 300 merks to Greenock, "all Scots money." The residue of his estate, and it was considerable, was bequeathed to "poor widows and orphans of ministers." The bequest of £100, the annual revenue of which was to be employed in defence of Protestantism and the great doctrine of the divinity of Christ, has had a chequered history. In 1758 a petition was presented to the Town Council of Glasgow by Alexander Stirling of Deanfield, nephew and heir of the Principal, showing that the ministers had neglected to preach the appointed sermons. It likewise suggested that as there was little need for such services, the proceeds might be handed over to the Glasgow Marine Society. The Council naturally consulted the ministers on the point, and finally it was agreed in January 1759, to grant the prayer of the petition, and apply the interest of the fund to the Society in question, until the ministers of Glasgow asked the Council to use it once more for its original purpose. Apparently the ministers were apathetic in the matter, for on the 13th November 1837, the Town Council transferred the principal sum of £100 itself to the Marine Society (*Minutes of Glasgow Council*).

Even long after his death, the pen of malice and misrepresentation was not dry. In the *Gentlemen's Magazine* for September 1783, Mr Disney, a Dissenting minister in London, made certain reflections on Stirling's management of the College funds, and accused him of appropriating a large sum for his own use. One wonders at such a charge being made, fifty-six years after the person concerned was dead. Stirling had too many unfriendly critics during his lifetime to let us suppose that conduct of this kind would have failed to receive its just condemnation. Leechman, the Principal of that day, brought the article before the Faculty, and was authorized to write to Disney vindicating Stirling.

Wodrow's last word about his old friend, in a letter to Cotton Mather intimating Stirling's death, may be accepted as a true estimate of his character and work—"He was a serious and tender Christian, one of the best of our preachers."

CHAPTER XIII

JOHN CURRIE, MODERATOR, 1709

John Currie had been in the ministry for only fourteen years when he was called, in 1709, to the Moderator's Chair. This is a remarkable record for a young man to hold. David Blair, in 1700, presided over the Assembly twelve years after his ordination, but he was then over sixty years of age. George Gillespie, perhaps, takes the first place in this respect, for he sat in the Moderator's Chair in the tenth year of his ministry, but Gillespie from his earliest days was *facile princeps* in all things among his brethren. Few men win their spurs when the dew of their youth is still upon them. There must, therefore, have been something very remarkable about the character and ability of John Currie to commend him to so many of his fellow-workers in the Church, that he was asked to preside over an Assembly, most of whose members had a far longer record of service than he could show.

Another point of interest may be noted regarding his appointment. Hitherto all the Moderators, since 1690, had been chosen from the stalwarts who had suffered and borne themselves well in the dark and cloudy day of trial. Even Principal Stirling, who was not ordained till 1691, had experienced in his father's manse and during his University curriculum, the difficulties and distresses which were the usual accompaniment of the years of persecution. Currie stands out as the first Moderator of the Church after Episcopacy was banished, who had no personal connection with the fight for Presbyterianism and spiritual freedom. A number of ministers were still alive who bore in their body the marks of warfare, but they were all passed over, and this stripling who knew not by experience the cost of liberty, was chosen to sit in the Church's historic Chair.

Apart, too, from the possession of a most winsome personality which drew towards him the favour of his fellows, there may have been running through the minds of many in the

Church, a desire that a minister from the country should occupy the place of honour. Hitherto, with the exception of Crichton of Bathgate and Simson of Renfrew, though their claims through long service and patient endurance were paramount, all the Moderators had come from the two big centres of population. One only belonged to Glasgow, the rest were taken from Edinburgh. It was fitting, therefore, that the faithful labours of brethren in quiet country charges should be recognized, and this was done in the person of Currie.

The upland parish of Ochiltree in southern Ayrshire, claims Currie as a native. No information has reached us about his early days, yet we can point to two influences which must have helped to mould his character, and make him an earnest and faithful minister. For one thing, he was in the very heart of the moors and mosses which were flowered with martyrs. On the neighbouring height of Corsegellioch, three Covenanters returning from a field meeting were shot by dragoons in 1685. From Cumnock, only four miles away, the news would soon travel to Ochiltree, of the execution of David Dun, whose father was a farmer in the parish. Sometimes Currie must have seen the big figure of weird old Peden, as he flitted about the district of his birth, and it may be, he was a witness of that act of sacrilege when the body of the Prophet of the Covenant was raised from its grave in Auchinleck, and carried to the Gallows Hill at Cumnock. The barons, too, of Ochiltree—stout Sir John Cochrane and his son John of Waterside, who dared and suffered in the cause of freedom—must have been well-known, at least by sight, to the future Moderator. In his youth, Currie breathed the very air of the Covenant, and he would have been untrue to the tradition of his fathers, and unworthy of the honour of birth in Covenanting Ayrshire, if he had not maintained the principles of freedom which had been preserved before his eyes at a cost so great.

The other circumstance which must have impressed itself deeply on the mind of Currie is of a different description. He was a student at the time. The year was 1690. The first minister of Ochiltree after the Revolution, Joseph Mitchell by name, was being settled. The induction service, for Mitchell had been already ordained, took place on the 29th April. On the next day he died, after the shortest incumbency, it is believed, in all the annals of the Church. Such an experience carried its lesson into the heart and life

of Currie. Even if he were not present, he could not forget it to the day of his death.

After obtaining license, Currie received a call in 1694 to the parish of Oldhamstocks, in the shire of Haddington. His ordination took place on the 14th March 1695. Possessed of attractive preaching gifts, he early drew to himself the attention of larger congregations. Two years after his settlement, the parishioners of Elgin desired to secure him as their minister. The Presbytery, however, refused to translate him. About the same time, the people of Prestonkirk sought him to come to them, but their call was also set aside. In 1701 he was instrumental in erecting a new church in Oldhamstocks. Three years afterwards his connection with the parish of his ordination came to an end, through his translation to the first charge in Haddington. Overtures had been made to Currie in the preceding year to come to Haddington, but the Presbytery refused to let him go. The case went up by appeal to the Commission. Turnbull in his *Diary*, under date 6th September 1703, tells us :—" Our pbitry mett att Dunbar about Mr Currie's transportation to Hadingtoun." On the 16th he adds, " The Commission [at Edinburgh] continued Mr Currie in Oldhamstocks." But the good people of the county town of East Lothian gained their end next year, and Currie entered upon his ministry among them on the 29th June 1704.

A MS. preserved in the *Wodrow Collection* in the Advocates' Library, gives some interesting details regarding Currie's settlement in Haddington. It is entitled *Passages in the Life of Mr J*[*ohn*] *B*[*ell*]. Bell was minister of Gladsmuir at the time, and was conversant with all that took place in connection with Currie's call. A strenuous attempt was made by the Episcopalian section of the community to secure a minister in sympathy with their views. Feeling ran high. " Rungs and staves " were used to support the arguments of the opposing parties. At length harmony of a kind was reached when early in January 1704, it was agreed to present a " most unanimous call to Mr John Currie," whom the Presbyterians from the very beginning of the vacancy had desired to come among them. The magistrates and town council of Haddington, being supporters of Episcopacy, were not able to sign the call. However they promised to give the new minister " all suitable encouragement," and so says

Mr Bell :—" Thus concluded this *Bellum Episcopale*" (*Wodrow MSS.* lxxxii. 4to.).

Currie's popularity as a preacher was further shown a few months later, when he was called to Edinburgh, but his ecclesiastical superiors wisely determined that it would not be fair to the people of Haddington to lose their minister so soon after his induction among them. In Haddington he remained till the end of his life.

Before he left Oldhamstocks, Currie married Sarah, daughter of Archibald Riddell, minister then at Kirkcaldy, afterwards in Edinburgh. The lady had already been sought in marriage by a neighbouring minister. Turnbull tells the story, for the would-be benedict apparently was too bashful to make his proposal in person. On the 9th April 1701, Turnbull writes :—" At the desire of Mr Hugh Darlin, minister at Ennerweeke, I proposed a design of marriage betwixt him and Sarah Riddell, to Mr Archibald Riddell, minister at Kirkcaldy, her father," Even if the ambassador was successful in his delicate mission, the marriage did not take place, owing doubtless to the death, in a few months, of the youthful minister of Innerwick. By Currie's marriage to Miss Riddell on the 26th November 1703, he became the son-in-law of a man who had fought a good fight in the old days, for he had been imprisoned on the Bass Rock for three years, and had also suffered much at the hands of the French, by whom he was taken prisoner when returning from New Jersey after the Revolution. Archibald Riddell was the third son of Sir Walter Riddell of that ilk.

The parish to which Currie had now come, was a collegiate one. Very soon after his settlement, be began to find himself in a difficult position. The circumstances were peculiar. His colleague, George Dunbar, was an Episcopalian, who had been allowed to remain in Haddington on the understanding that he would do nothing to upset Presbyterianism. It need not be said that many of the old curates were permitted to continue in the Church on this condition. But it will be seen at once, that frank, harmonious relations could not possibly be maintained between two men, both presumably honest in their convictions, who had to preach alternately in the same pulpit and rule over the same congregation. Such a situation, though it could not be common, occurred occasionally in the Church at this period. The difficulties which emerged in connection with it were only natural, and they

have a lesson for our own time which needs to be remembered. Even though Dunbar's mouth was shut on the great dividing question of Presbyter *versus* Bishop, the conditions could not but be irksome to Currie, and he found them almost too hard to bear. Possibly it was the knowledge that he was not at ease which made the people of St Cuthbert's in Edinburgh seek him as their minister in 1706. The Presbytery's refusal to put the call into his hands, shows how they regarded Currie as the best man to overcome the difficulties of the position.

In spite of Currie's tact and gentleness of disposition, however, the unequally yoked colleagues could not work in harmony. How large a following Dunbar had we are not told, but evidently a good deal of friction showed itself between the two ministers and their respective parties. Feeling reached a high pitch in 1710, when Currie received a fresh call to Edinburgh. Wodrow, in one of his Assembly letters, thus records the incident:—" Mr J. Currie's transportation came in from Haddington to Edinburgh, where there were long reasonings on all hands, and a paper of Mr Currie's grievances at Haddington read. Prayer was made before the reasonings began, because it was said there was need of light in reasoning, and it might be said that members were much determined after reasoning. The Assembly, almost unanimously, continued Mr Currie at Haddington, and that mostly upon the honest party there, their offer to get him a colleague, and help his grievances as much as might be" (*Corr.* i. 139). The Commission of Assembly further considered the state of affairs, and recommended the congregation to provide Currie with an assistant. Possibly this goes to prove that the Episcopal party was very small in numbers, and that the work of the double charge almost wholly fell on Currie. Relief came at length. In October 1711, Mr Dunbar died, and a way was opened for a more sympathetic colleague being placed alongside of Currie. Yet eighteen months elapsed before Partick Wilkie was ordained to the vacant charge. Wodrow seems to hint that Currie's difficulties did not disappear with the death of Dunbar. In April 1714, he writes:—" I was this month correspondent with the Synod of Lothian. Mr Currie's grievances at Haddington are such that he seeks to be loosed from that place (*Ana.* ii. 284).

It was while he was carrying on his work patiently at

Haddington that the call came to him, in 1709, to occupy the Moderator's Chair. An old minister who had presided before over the Assembly, Thomas Wilkie of the Canongate, and five others were nominated, but Currie gained the vote. The sympathies of the Eastwood historian were evidently given to Wilkie as a pre-Revolution worthy. Wilkie would certainly have "carried it," we are told, "if he had not made a great bustle about his inability of body" (*Corr.* i. 2).

Two events of a noteworthy character took place during this meeting of the Supreme Court of the Church. The spread of the visionary views of Antoinette Bourignon had begun to alarm in some measure the leaders of the Church. They felt it necessary to deal with the heresy in a stringent way. In 1701 an Act had been passed setting forth the "impious, pernicious and damnable doctrines," which proceeded from the pen of the Belgian Quietist. In the same year, Dr George Garden of Aberdeen had been deposed for adopting her tenets. The Assembly of 1709 took a further step, and "earnestly recommended to Presbyteries to use all effectual means to prevent the spreading of the dangerous errors of Bourignonism, and the Commission is instructed to use all suitable endeavours for that purpose, and particularly that care be taken to suppress the meetings of such as are tainted with these errors." It was left to the Assembly of 1711 to insist upon an explicit disavowal of these views from every entrant into the office of the ministry.

The other event was connected with a matter of discipline coming up by appeal from the Synod of Aberdeen to the Assembly. The charge was one of inefficiency and unsoundness, brought against William Law or Lawson, minister of Crimond in the Presbytery of Deer. He was suspended by the Synod of the province on the 27th March 1707, for erroneous doctrine, teaching that "virtue was more natural to the human mind than vice" (*Fasti,* iii. 625). We are indebted for an account of what took place in the Assembly to Calamy, who was paying a visit to Carstares at the time. This is what he says. Upon "[Law's appearing before the Synod of Aberdeen], a committee was appointed to draw up a considerable number of questions on the most noted heads of divinity, to which he was to give a direct answer. His answers were to be taken in writing, and a judgment formed from thence as to his fitness for the ministry. The majority of that Synod was against him; but he appealed to the

General Assembly, where the exceptions were read, and also the questions (above one hundred in number), together with his answers. Some of these answers it must be confessed, were weak. Others were as proper as would, I believe, have been returned off-hand by many whose sufficiency was no way called in question.

"The Assembly seemed to be at a loss what to do with this man. The Moderator, stooping down and whispering me in the ear as the questions were read over, asked me what my apprehensions were. I frankly answered that we in England should reckon this way of proceeding, the Inquisition revived; at which he could not help smiling. Lord Forbes, who sat on the bench above me, asked what passed between the Moderator and me, at which he smiled. I freely told him, and he immediately fell to laughing. The Lord President, who sat on the bench above him, inquiring what he laughed at, and he giving him an account, joined also in the laugh. At last, the Commissioner, who could not well help observing this, stooped down, and whispered the Lord President of the Session, and asked what was the occasion of all this laughing? Being told, he could not forbear joining. In short, it was whispered from one to another, till it went round the Assembly" (*Life* ii. 155).

The case of Law does not concern us here. Suffice it to say that the Assembly on the report of a committee relaxed the sentence of suspension, but Law dissatisfied with his treatment, renounced Presbyterianism, accepted ordination at the hands of the bishop, and set up Episcopal worship in Crimond.

Calamy was destined to hear of his joke again. The solid, granite spirit of the Aberdonians could not stand the Assembly laughing at their ecclesiastical procedure. Accordingly, when Calamy went to the north of Scotland, he found he was not very graciously received in certain quarters. Let him tell his own story. "I waited on Mr Osborne, Professor of Divinity, a venerable old gentleman, at that time confined by illness. Discoursing of the proceedings of the late Assembly, he frankly told me it was not well taken among them that I should there represent the conduct of their Synod of Aberdeen as a revival of the Inquisition. I told him that . . . when the Moderator was pleased in a free and familiar, but private way, to ask a question, I thought, without just offence to any, I might be allowed to make him a free answer in the same way. And if I said anything at all to the

Moderator, in return to his question, I thought it became me to signify my real apprehension of the matter without any collusion. . . . I added, that if what I had dropped was conveyed to others, it was not by me ; but was entirely owing to the inquisitiveness of the members of the Assembly, who gave it a quick conveyance from one to another till it passed quite round. Whereas I only told it to the Lord Forbes, to whom I could not, without downright rudeness, have refused to give an answer. While I had this discourse with Professor Osborne, Mr Blackwell, who afterwards succeeded him in his Profession, was also present " (p. 199).

The incident ended with goodwill on both sides. The University gave the degree of D.D. to Calamy, who in return entertained to supper " the Masters and all the servants of the College."

A matter affecting Currie himself occupied for a time the attention of the Assembly, and during its discussion Currie must have left the Chair. Calls seemed to pour in upon the minister of Haddington without ceasing. Edinburgh sought him once more. Strong efforts were made to keep him by his own parishioners. In this case again, as in every other, they were successful. " Mr Currie's transportation," says Wodrow, " from Haddington to Edinburgh is referred to Monday " (*Corr.* i. 11). On Monday the Assembly refused to translate him.

It is interesting also to notice that during the Assembly of 1709, steps were taken to form public libraries in all Presbyteries throughout Scotland—a measure which shows the wise and thoughtful concern taken by the Church in the intellectual improvement of the people. Possibly the library formed at the Presbytery seat may have been specially intended for ministers. The act runs as follows :—" It is recommended to such Presbyteries as have not received any of the books sent from England for making up public libraries, to contribute among themselves in order to lay a foundation for a library in each Presbytery seat ; and also to endeavour to procure collections in their several parishes, less or more, for that end ; and it is referred to the commission to forward the above recommendation, and presbyteries who have got a share of these libraries, are desired to send accounts to the Commission of their receipt of them, where they are fixed, how they have observed the rules sent with them, and what improvements they are making of them."

Currie discharged the duties of the Moderator's Chair with great credit to himself. Calamy especially was delighted with the way in which he filled his high position. "The Moderator," he says, "behaved himself with great prudence, good temper and frankness. His conduct met with general approval. Often when matters appeared intricate and embarrassed, I wondered how he whose place it was to lead the rest would get clear of the difficulties; and observed that by turning things several ways, he at last brought them to the best issue the case would admit, and have sometimes been surprised" (ii. 157). The same writer informs us, too, that Currie had to assert the authority of the Chair to restrain certain young men who were inclined to speak too frequently. He puts it rather quaintly. "I remember," he observes, "there was one in particular, that was several times publicly reproved by the Moderator for speaking oftener than it came to his turn."

His account of the close of the Assembly is interesting. "The Moderator in the name of the whole Assembly returned thanks to the Lord Commissioner for all the expressions of his kind regard; and to all the members for their harmony among themselves, concern for the public, and respect for him, who hoped they would overlook and forgive the unwilling failure and infirmities he had been chargeable with, in that difficult station to which they had chosen him" (p. 159). Currie was one of a company invited by Principal Stirling to meet Calamy at dinner during the sittings of the Assembly. To this gathering reference has been made in the life of Stirling.

A case which gave a great deal of trouble to the Church Courts was entrusted largely to Currie, in whose judgment and business capacity his brethren must have put full confidence. The matter arose in connection with a call to Burntisland given to a probationer, named Duguid or Doucat. Its details may be briefly mentioned. Wodrow thus refers to it in a letter dated the 8th May 1713, when the case had reached the Assembly. "After this," he writes, "Mr Doucat's affair and Burntisland came before the Assembly. I shall not insist on the history of this gentleman, who is like to be very famous or infamous rather. He was one of the first that got and accepted a presentation from the Queen. He was educate in Popery, and is but lately, that is, within some few years, turned Protestant. The last Assembly

remitted the case to the Commission. Of a competition of calls upon his presentation, the matter came before the Commission, who declined considering it; the Presbytery when they entered upon the cognoscing of a scandal or many, were appealed from to the Synod; the Synod, when delaying the consideration of the appeal, were appealed from to the Assembly. He is the tool of the Jacobite party in Fife and here; and because the Synod appointed a Committee to inquire into the scandals, the town of Burntisland being managed by Jacobites, have rabbled the ministers the Presbytery of Kirkcaldy sent there to supply. Three ministers have been rabbled, and last Saturday a fourth" (*Corr.* i. 457).

The Assembly on the report of a special committee to which the matter had been referred, declared Duguid's license null and void, forbade him to preach, and drew up an address containing an account of the case for submission to the advisers of the Queen. For the fact of Duguid's presentation to Burntisland by the Queen was the difficult element with which the Church had to deal, and the Assembly was determined to maintain its right to say who should or should not be ordained. Duguid had taken his stand on the Queen's deed of presentation, and after the sentence of the Supreme Court, intimated an appeal to her Majesty and the House of Peers. It fell, therefore, to the Assembly to see that their position was clearly set forth before the authorities in London. Currie, from his connection with the case, had been cited to appear before the House of Peers on the 22nd May. The Assembly, in view of this, authorized him to use "the Church's credit for about £50 sterling, to defray the charges of the process" (p. 459).

The case of Duguid does not require further reference. It need only be said the Church gained its point, and another minister was settled in Burntisland. Duguid obtained ordination from the Bishop of Carlisle, and for two years conducted Episcopal services in Burntisland.

Of the preaching of Currie we have no specimen. To his pulpit gifts, however, full testimony is borne by the number of calls which he received. These cannot point to anything else than the possession of high qualifications for the ordinary work of the ministry. As retiring Moderator, he preached at the opening of the Assembly of 1710. He chose a singular text for his sermon—the Song of Solomon, iii. 7, 8. "Behold

his bed, which is Solomon's; three score valiant men are about it, of the valiant of Israel. They all hold swords, being expert in war; every man hath his sword upon his thigh because of fear in the night." Wodrow, who heard the sermon, does not make the slightest comment upon it. Did it contain a graceful eulogy of the sixty men, sole survivors of the four hundred evicted in 1662, who gathered together in Edinburgh, in 1690, to form the nucleus of the re-constituted Presbyterian Church?

One other reference to Currie may be given. It shows the interest which the Scottish Church took in its faithful members who had crossed the Border into England. In 1710, the year following his Moderatorship, he took part along with other representative men in issuing a circular sent evidently to every Presbytery, inviting sympathy with and help for distressed and persecuted Scots in Newcastle. These expatriated countrymen had a real grievance. They found themselves in a great difficulty in connection with the burial of their dead—a difficulty which arose partly from the heavy fees that were levied, and partly from the insistence by the authorities that the Church of England service should be used at all funerals. The document speaks for itself. "It is well known to us," the writers say, "as well as to many others, that there are several thousands of Scots people at Newcastle, many of which were forced from their native country in the days of persecution, and it is also made evident to us by petitions from several godly people of our country and way, as well as by letters from the dissenting ministers there, that our countrymen are in very deplorable circumstances. They are not allowed to bury in the Churchyards there, without paying extravagant prices for the privilege, and they being generally poor labouring people are not able [and] are reduced to extraordinary hardships, being forced to bury in the sand, in a common place where ships throw out their ballast, and many times to the great grief of all concerned, the reproach of our country and the scandal of our most holy profession, dogs and swine have access to pull out and eat the bodies of Christians so interred."

One cannot help admiring in reading this paper, the restraint which the signatories put upon themselves in speaking of this miserable state of affairs as merely "the reproach of our country." Much more was it the "reproach of England." Financial help was asked from the Church at

large to meet the distress of the Scottish Presbyterians in Newcastle. And the appeal for aid was clinched by the Latin motto with which the document closed—*Bis dat qui cito dat.* What response was given to this urgent call for help does not concern us here. Eleven signatures were attached to it, Currie's among the number. As a good many of them were Moderators, the list may be given. First comes "W. Carstares," who is followed by William Wisheart, John Stirling, James Hadow, Thomas Blackwell, Samuel Semple, Patrick Cumming, James Ramsay, John Currie, one whose signature has defied interpretation, and William Mitchell (*Glasgow Herald*, 10th June 1911).

We do not meet with Currie's name again in connection with the public work of the Church. He remained quietly in Haddington, attending diligently to the needs of his people. His ministry was not a long one. The end came on the 18th June 1720, twenty-six years after his ordination, He had a family of two sons and one daughter. His interest in his native parish of Ochiltree continued till his death. Probably he visited his old home from time to time. By his will he left a sum of money to be distributed among the poor of Ochiltree.

The appendix to *Gospel Truth* gives brief notices of "several divines who were friends to the doctrines of grace," and among others who, it is said, might also be mentioned as agreeing with them, appears the name of Currie of Haddington. Scott records of him in the *Fasti,* that "he was a fluent preacher, of peaceable, moderate principles in Church polity, and altogether a valuable person."

CHAPTER XIV

WILLIAM MITCHELL, MODERATOR, 1710, 1714, 1717, 1722 AND 1726

After the death of Carstares, there was no one who took so great a share in moulding the policy of the Church as William Mitchell. His elevation to the Chair of the Assembly on five occasions within seventeen years, is a sufficient proof of this fact. Professor Hamilton came next to him in prominence, and practically fell heir to the leadership of the Assembly on the death of Mitchell, but from 1715 when Carstares passed away, till 1727 when he himself died suddenly on his way to London, Mitchell must be regarded as the wisest and most trusted guide whom the Scottish Church possessed. Though he was not a man of the first rank in point of mental ability and wide scholarship, his endowments were of a high enough order to enable him to fill with credit the important place to which he was admitted by general consent.

Mitchell came of a good old family. He was descended from the Mitchells of Thainston, a property in the parish of Kintore to which his well-known son, Sir Andrew, afterwards succeeded. His father, whose name he bore, had been minister of Footdee in Aberdeen, whence after a ministry of fourteen years he had been driven in 1681, on account of his refusal to take the Test. After the Revolution he was settled first in Leslie, and then in 1691 in Dundee, where he died in 1712. He lived long enough to see his son sit for the first time in the Moderator's Chair.

Mitchell was born during his father's ministry in Aberdeen about the year 1670. A younger brother, Thomas, became minister first at Coupar Angus, and then at Longforgan. His career, however, was short. He died in 1713 at the age of forty-one. Neither of the sons engaged in literary work. In this they were unlike their father, who when in Aberdeen found himself involved along with George Meldrum in a controversy with the Quakers, and published (1) *A Dialogue between a Quaker and a Stable Christian*; (2) *Ane Sober*

Answer to an angry pamphlet, or a Reply to Robert Barclay's Book—Truth cleared of Calumnies; (3) *Ane Catechisme.* The mother of William and Thomas Mitchell was Elizabeth Cant, a member probably of the celebrated Aberdeen family of that name.

We have no information of the early days of William Mitchell. His connection with Aberdeen justifies us in supposing that he received his education in the northern city. After license, he was called to the Canongate Church in Edinburgh to be colleague to Thomas Wilkie. In Edinburgh, first in one church and then in another he spent the rest of his life. His ordination took place in 1695.

Mitchell's character as a preacher during the early part of his ministry, may be learned from the *Memoirs* of Elizabeth West, who attended a course of sermons preached by him in his own church on weekdays from Romans vi. 12, "Let not sin, therefore, reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof." This is what she says about them :—"These sermons were suitable every way to my present case, and great delight had I in hearing them. He observed many things from the words, but especially these two I remember—(1) That as sin had a reigning and domineering power over all, so this power was in some measure broken in believers, so that it shall not reign there as formerly. Where he made use of these expressions—Is it possible that there can be a revolution in a kingdom, one king dethroned and another enthroned, and the subjects know nothing of it? No, surely it cannot be so quietly done. On the back of this, he came with a large and free offer to captive sinners, which my very heart and soul went out after. (2) He observed that as sin's dominion was broken in believers, so sin as an usurper was always labouring to bring its former power in their souls again, yet notwithstanding all its attempts it should never overcome them altogether, and that because the infinite power of God was engaged for them ; for nothing else could preserve the spunk of grace in the soul. When he brought a very lively similitude—as if, suppose, one saw a spark of fire in the midst of the ocean, they would say, surely it will be a wonder if that spark be preserved in the ocean, but would it not be a greater wonder if that spark should dry up all the ocean ? He told us that it was a wonder that it was preserved in the midst of such an ocean of corruption, and yet it was a greater wonder that the spunk of grace

would, one day or other, dry up all those oceans of corruption whatsoever" (p. 91).

Two years later, in 1702 she writes:—"This day, Mr William Mitchell was on these words, 'Woman, why weepest thou? Whom seekest thou?' John xx. 15. Where he observed (1) That the soul that was seeking Christ would never give over till it find Him; (2) That Christ's absence was such a trouble to a believer, that all other things in the world could not content them till they found Him" (p. 107).

From these extracts, it is evident that, from the beginning of his ministry, Mitchell was in thorough agreement with the great doctrines of the Reformation. To be judged so favourably by Elizabeth West is high commendation.

Testimony to Mitchell as a preacher is likewise borne by Wodrow, who was very intimate with him, and heard the sermons delivered by Mitchell in the Assembly. In 1711, Wodrow wrote to his wife:—"This day we had an excellent sermon from Mr Mitchell, upon Zech. vi. 13, upon the regal power of Christ in His Church. It were a pity but it were printed, but the sermons that are most proper for the press do not come there" (*Corr.* i. 213). In 1715, he gives the following account of Mitchell's services. "This day we had an excellent sermon from Mr Mitchell, from Ps. lxiv. 9, 10. From the context, he described the late state of affairs in the opposition made to the king, from that which was made to David, most home and cautiously. In the explication of the text, he had a turn upon the good actions of persons in a state of nature, or of all men, which I did not like so well. He described the wise consideration of God's works of Providence most charmingly, and improved it very agreeably" (ii. 28). Three years later he speaks in this way:—"Yesterday we had by Mr Mitchell a most seasonable sermon for ministers" (ii. 375). In 1723, he strikes the same kindly note of appreciation. "We had a good sermon," he says, "from Mr Mitchell preached on Rom. xiv. 19, 'Follow after the things which make for peace.' He had, you may be sure, a good sermon on the head of peace, and some very seasonable advices at the close" (iii. 44). A fuller account comes from Wodrow's pen of Mitchell's sermon at the opening of the Assembly in 1727. Simson's case was to be up for consideration, and Mitchell deemed it good to direct the Assembly's attention to the heavy responsibility which rested on every member. Wodrow's epitome is long, but

as it reveals Mitchell's theological position, it may be given in full. "[Mr Mitchell] said it was plainer than he needed notice it, that at this time we were threatened with error; that the last Assembly had found it their duty to appoint an inquiry to be made into it; that now a report was to be made to this Assembly, and the whole to be judged by them; that they were not to be directed by him as to the case before them; only he craved leave to observe that the subject matter of their consideration was the greatest that possibly could be before them; that the subject of the proper Deity of the Son was what, in all ages of the Church, had been mostly attacked by heretics; that in all ages they put forth their utmost force upon this foundation truth; that the Church had been vexed by the mixing in the cunning and fancies of men with the pure revelation of God; that the subject of the Trinity was what we are bound to receive purely on the authority of revelation; that in this matter we can have no assistance of reason, or anything but revelation; that this subject was so delicate and tender, that he trembled to speak of it; and much more to this purpose delivered with much concern and gravity" (iii. 291).

One other sermon was preached by Mitchell before the Assembly. This was in 1716. Carstares, who had been Moderator in the preceding year, had died. Mitchell was called upon to take his place. Of his sermon on that occasion, Wodrow says it was "most solid" (ii. 168).

In the absence of any printed sermons from Mitchell's pen, we must form our opinion of his preaching from the testimony of these two witnesses—Elizabeth West and Robert Wodrow. To their verdict we are able to add a brief encomium from Ralph Erskine, who according to his biographer, Fraser, characterized a sermon by Mitchell as "short but substantial [and having] a sweet application" (p. 29). The favourable testimony of these three witnesses is a cord which cannot be broken. Mitchell was loyal to the Evangel of Christ. His style of preaching, too, seems to have been interesting and attractive. His last sermon before the Assembly in 1727 created a great impression. There was some idea of issuing a selection of his sermons, but nothing came of it. "He hath left all his sermons writt very full," is the statement of his old friend in the *Analecta* (iii. 461). Possibly some of them are still in existence.

The preaching abilities which Mitchell possessed made

his promotion certain. First, there came to him in 1702, a call to one of the city churches, but for some reason it was departed from. Six years later, on the 27th June 1708, he was inducted to St Giles. After labouring there for nearly thirteen years, he was translated on the 5th February 1721, to the High Church of Edinburgh, where he continued till the end of his life. There had been a long vacancy in this charge to which Mitchell was now appointed. No minister had succeeded Carstares, whose death had taken place six years before. The charge was a collegiate one, so that the High Church was not left without a minister. A good deal of controversy seems to have been waged over the filling up of the vacant pulpit. Mitchell's name was mentioned in connection with it in 1718. Wodrow says in August of that year :—" Mr Mitchell's transportation by the magistrates of Edinburgh and call to the New Church (High) is like to breed new differences there " (*Ana.* ii. 330). And a correspondent, Mr James Dougal, writing to him on the 4th January 1721, remarks :—" They are saying that Mr Mitchell is to be brought to the New Kirk to Mr Matheson [minister of the first charge], but it is not known yet." He then adds somewhat sneeringly—" He is a longheaded man, that Mr Mitchell " (*Private Letters to Prof. Wodrow*).

As Mitchell was Moderator in five Assemblies many matters of importance fell to be discussed under his leadership. He sat for the first time in the Chair in 1710. Three other nominations were made. " The votes split as much as ever I saw," says the faithful minister of Eastwood. " Mr Mitchell had 49 votes, Mr James Brown 45, Mr Blackwell 44, and Mr Nairn about as many " (*Corr.* i. 137). Only the one vote seems to have been taken.

In this Assembly the final act adopted by the Church regarding the doctrine of Madame Bourignon was passed. In accordance with it ministers were instructed to call attention from the pulpit to the erroneous character of her teaching ; presbyteries within whose bounds there was any society of Bourignonists, were " ordained to send to the Commission an exact and full account of the particular leading persons of the said societies, and the Professors of Divinity within the Church were recommended to make a full collection of the errors of Antonia Bourignon, and of such other errors as reflected upon the nature, person and offices of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to write a confutation

of the same." One hardly wonders, in view of the widespread diffusion of the peculiar tenets of Madame Bourignon throughout Scotland, that the Assembly of 1711 should call upon all entrants into the ministry to disown publicly all sympathy with her opinions. It may be noted that Madame Bourignon seems to be the only woman whose teaching fell under the ban of the General Assembly. She certainly achieved notoriety when, in the formula for license and ordination, she was bracketed with the Pope, as well as with Arius, Socinus and Arminius, as a heretic of the deepest dye. It is well-known that in 1846, the Free Church of Scotland left out all reference to her views in the list of vows demanded of its ministers. Licentiates of the Church of Scotland, however, were forced to repudiate her doctrines, till her name was removed from the formula for subscription in 1889.

During this Assembly, Mitchell wrote an official letter to the Earl of Sunderland as representing the Government of Queen Anne, to which his lordship took exception. The Assembly it seems had appointed a national fast without asking the authority of the Crown. The Queen overlooked the omission, and gave her sanction to the appointment; but the Earl of Sunderland in her name, in a letter to Carstares, expressed the hope that the Assembly would not repeat such a procedure, as it was not likely that it would meet again "with the same easiness and compliance in the Government" (*Carstares State Papers*, p. 786). This serves to show with what a jealous eye the State watched the action of the Church.

The same Assembly of 1710 witnessed the passing of an "Act for preserving the purity of doctrine" in the Church, by which no minister or member of the Church was permitted "to print or disperse in writing any catechism, without the allowance of the Presbytery of the bounds and of the Commission." The name of the Act is most commendable, but when it is remembered that it was drawn up with a view to stop the publication of such a work as the *Catechism on the Covenants of Works and Grace* issued by Hamilton of Airth, we recognize that the Act was not so harmless as it looked. Objection was taken very strongly to Hamilton's *Catechism* by Principal Stirling of Glasgow and Principal Hadow of St Andrews. Thus early was serious opposition shown to pronounced evangelical views. It must, however, be

borne in mind that both of these Principals were hostile to the views of Professor Simson.

The second Assembly over which Mitchell presided, met in 1714. It is chiefly remarkable for the discussion which took place on the teaching of Professor Simson from the Chair of Divinity in Glasgow. It was alleged that his lectures were tainted with Pelagian and Arminian doctrines. Probably, in the absence of any volume issued by the Professor, it was difficult to institute a process against him. The evidence in support of the charge of heresy brought against him was almost wholly taken from the notebooks of his students. For this reason, among others, the Glasgow Presbytery declined to take up the case. James Webster, however, the stalwart champion of orthodoxy in Edinburgh, would not allow the matter to rest. Certainly it was hardly fair in a case of this kind to allow the burden of prosecuting the charge to rest upon a solitary individual belonging to another Presbytery. Into the details of the case, however, there is no call to enter here. It must suffice to say that year by year the Assembly took up the matter, until in 1717, when Mitchell again was Moderator, Simson received from the Assembly a mild censure, which was deemed inadequate by many members. For though it was judged "that he hath vented some opinions not necessary to be taught in Divinity, and that have given more occasion to strife than to the promoting of edification . . . and hath adopted some hypotheses different from what are commonly used among orthodox divines, that are not evidently founded on Scripture, and *tend* to attribute too much to reason and the power of corrupt nature; which undue advancement of reason and nature is always to the disparagement of revelation and efficacious free grace, the General Assembly prohibits and discharges the said Mr John Simson to use such expressions, or to teach, preach or otherwise vent such opinions, propositions or hypotheses, as aforesaid." The Assembly would have saved itself a good deal of trouble, if it had boldly faced the situation now and removed him from his Chair. The second process against him, begun in 1726, would then have been unnecessary. For there cannot be any doubt that the view he expressed by which he made human reason the judge of revealed truth, is distinctively Socinian in its character, so that the second Simson case was but the development of the first. The second case will

meet us again in Mitchell's biography. Now it fell to him as Moderator, in 1717, to intimate to the Professor the decision of the Assembly.

At the same meeting of the Supreme Court of the Church in 1717, when Mitchell occupied the Chair for the third time, a step was taken which had the effect of overruling the wishes of the people in the settlement of ministers. The course then entered upon was fraught with disastrous consequences in the years to come. The case arose in Peebles. A minister had been presented to the parish, to whom the people strongly objected. The Presbytery by a majority refused to ordain. An appeal was taken to the Assembly, which decided to appoint a Committee to be associated with the Presbytery with instructions to settle the presentee in the charge. In this way, the reluctance of the majority in the Presbytery was overcome, and the opposition of the parishioners set aside. The occasion is noteworthy, because it is the first instance of the appointment of such a Committee by the Assembly. The Church, unfortunately, became quite accustomed to this method of procedure in later days, when "Riding Committees" went hither and thither to intrude ministers on unwilling congregations.

In the Assembly of 1722, Mitchell was placed almost unanimously in the Chair. Only three or four votes were given against him. The honour was bestowed upon him for the fourth time. Just one matter calls for attention in the proceedings of this Assembly. As far as the Church Courts were concerned, the great Marrow controversy came now practically to an end. No further notice of it is to be found in the records of the Church, except in connection with Gabriel Wilson of Maxton, who gained his case in the Assembly of 1723. It may almost be said that the conflict died from exhaustion. The opposition to the Marrow had been overdone. So much was this the case that a very general feeling prevailed that the severe sentence passed in 1720 on the supporters of the Marrow doctrines, had gone beyond the bounds of truth and justice. The unexpected closing of the Assembly of the following year, owing to the illness of the Lord High Commissioner, had delayed proceedings. The twelve Representers had laid their petition on the table of the Assembly. Along with much other business, the petition was relegated to the Commission. The delay told in favour of the Marrow men. It was too much to

expect that the obnoxious Act would be repealed. The Assembly of 1722 stood by it, though at the same time an attempt was made to explain its harsh elements. Fettered by its own decision two years before, the Assembly deemed itself unable to do anything else than prohibit ministers from teaching the doctrines of the Marrow, and called upon the Moderator to rebuke and admonish the twelve brethren —*clari et honorati viri*—who had signed the representation. It devolved upon Mitchell to administer the rebuke. Thereupon the Representers laid upon the table a protest which had, as he tells us himself, been drawn up by Boston, and in which they asserted their liberty to teach the truths condemned. Of the protest no notice was taken, and all further proceedings in connection with the Marrow ceased. This happy result may partly have been due to the fact that the Marrow had more supporters in the Church than the leaders at first imagined. The Crown, too, had intimated its wish that care should be taken to avoid all schism. Boston's words on the sentence passed on him and his friends by Mitchell in the name of the Assembly are well-known :— " I received the rebuke and admonition as an ornament put upon me, being for the cause of truth."

Almost nothing needs to be noticed regarding the fifth and last Moderatorship of Mitchell in 1726. For the Chair, he was nominated by the Lord High Commissioner. Wodrow thus records the circumstances of the election :—" Mr William Hamilton, Professor of Divinity, was concerted by a good many, because Mr Mitchell has of late made a particular turn, because he declined it, because he was since Professor Hamilton, and because those I speak of are not for still being tied down to one named by the Commissioner. The struggle ran very near. As I reckoned it on my buttons, Mr Mitchell had but one, and I am pretty sure he had not two. However, it carried, and he had a speech as usual." The sorrowful news is added that at the time, Mitchell's daughter was " a-dying " (*Corr.* iii. 240).

To this Assembly there came up by appeal the case of the settlement of James Chalmers in one of the churches in Aberdeen. The matter had been before the Supreme Court in the preceding year as well. As it is dealt with in the biography of James Alston, who was Moderator in 1725, it does not need to be further referred to. It may be of interest to add in connection with Mitchell's occupancy of the Chair,

that when in 1715 he welcomed Carstares as his successor, he took the unusual course of addressing him formally in a short speech, assuring him that the Church had again expressed its sense of his ability to serve it by an almost unanimous vote.

On several occasions Mitchell, from the prominent position he held in the affairs of the Church, formed one of a deputation to royalty in London. In 1714, he went as Moderator along with Carstares and other brethren to congratulate George I. on his accession to the Crown. James Hart of Edinburgh, one of the delegates, wrote a *Journal* of their doings and experiences. In it we are told that three of the deputies—Lining, Ramsay and Hart himself—agreed to meet at Kelso on the 2nd October. Three days after, they joined Carstares and Mitchell at Newcastle. "We all waited upon Mr Carstares that night," says the diarist. On the 20th October, the entry is made—" paid for winning into Westminster Abbey one shilling and twopence." The occasion of their "winning" into the historic Abbey is interesting. The 20th October was the day of the king's coronation. It is further added that Mitchell, Hart and Ramsay witnessed the great ceremonial "in the habit of gentlemen with coloured clothes." Hart at the same time notes the fact that "Mr Mitchell was our manager upon the road." Just before they left London (Carstares, however, continued his stay in the south), the deputation through the good offices of the Duke of Montrose, the Secretary of State, received the gift of £100 from the king. The day before Christmas, they started on their journey home. On the 4th January, they reached Kendal. "We lighted," says Hart, "at the King's Arms and after we had supped, we—Messrs Mitchell, Ramsay and I—went and saw a comedie acted; the play, they called it *Love for Love*." Apparently Lining did not accompany his brethren to this entertainment.

When in London Mitchell was appointed one of the king's chaplains, an honour which he had enjoyed before under Queen Anne. In 1716, he was made sub-dean of the Chapel Royal. An interesting incident took place during the stay of this deputation in London. They waited upon Bishop Burnet, whose connection with the Scottish Church had formerly been so close. Wodrow tells us they "were edified with the fervour with which he praised [Guthrie's] *The Christian's Great Interest*. Recently, he told them, he had

republished it for the use of his diocese, And ere they left, he presented each member of the deputation with a " gilded copy " of the book (Clarke and Foxcroft's *Burnet*, p. 470).

Three years later, Mitchell and Professor Hamilton were sent as Commissioners to London to seek the repeal of the Patronage Act and the alteration of the Abjuration Oath. No redress was given, it need hardly be said, in connection with patronage, but success crowned their efforts to secure the amendment of the obnoxious Oath. It is only too well known how much strife and bitterness had been produced by the Oath in its original form. The deputies obtained the excision of the clause which asserted that the sovereign must be a member of the Church of England. The Oath in its new form simply bound those who took it to loyal obedience to the House of Hanover and renunciation of the Stewart dynasty.

Fortunately Mitchell kept a *Diary* of his journey with Hamilton, which has been published by the Spalding Club (*Miscel.* i.). Some matters of interest may be quoted. Nothing is said by Mitchell about the journey itself. London was reached on the 9th February, and till the 17th April, when they started on their way home, they were busy interviewing members of the Government and Scottish members of Parliament. " On February 21st," he says, " we were introduced to the King in his closet by Roxburgh, and Mr Hamilton read the following speech to him in English, Roxburgh having told us that he understood English and that it was not fit the custom of speaking French should be kept up." In the address, reference was made to the " so large and almost boundless Toleration " given " to those of the Episcopal persuasion in Scotland," and to the " Act restoring Patronage whereby the legal constitution of this Church was altered in a very important point, and the right of the people in choosing those to whom they entrusted the care of their souls restrained." The address closed with the words that the Church " ceaseth not to put up most fervent prayers, that your Majesty may be blest with a long and prosperous reign on earth and with eternal glory in heaven, and that one of your royal family may never be wanting to sway the British sceptre unto the end of the world."

The king answered in French, " as Roxburgh told us, ' I am well satisfied of the good affection of the Church of Scotland, and I shall be glad of an occasion to serve them.' "

The deputies likewise saw the Prince and Princess of Wales. The Princess said, "Gentlemen, I am sorry your Church has grievances, I hope they do not hurt you very much; but I beg your pardon, I should have said your *Kirk*."

On the 25th March, they were again graciously received by His Majesty, when they presented to him the address from the Commission which had just been sitting at Edinburgh. On the 5th April, the entry occurs:—"We had the honour to kiss the three young princesses' hands, who are all three of charming countenance and behaviour. The two eldest asked in a very obliging manner from what place we came, and if we came together." On the 16th, the deputies had their final interview with the king, "who told Roxburgh in French, which he repeated to us in English, that he was well satisfied of our loyalty and affection, upon which we kissed his Majesty's hand."

This account is interesting not only because of its personal details, but also because it settles the question whether George of Hanover understood English. As Hill Burton remarks:—"The reader will remember how often the assertion of Archdeacon Coxe has been repeated, that Walpole and George I. spoke to each other in bad Latin, because the King could not speak English and the minister was ignorant of French" (*Hist.* viii. 385). Even such a careful historian of the period as Lord Mahon says, that George was "utterly ignorant of the English language." (*Hist.* i. 146). On the 14th May, the two deputies gave in their report to the Assembly—Mitchell, who was in the Chair leaving it for the purpose. Thereupon, it is recorded in the minutes, "Mr Thomas Blackwell, Moderator *pro tempore*, in the Assembly's name and at their desire, gave them thanks for their prudent, zealous and faithful management of the matters entrusted to them." In the discharge of this business, Mitchell and Hamilton must have been absent from Edinburgh for fully three months. At the following Assembly, Mitchell received the sum of £100 in name of the expenses he had incurred on his visit to London. He immediately handed it over to the Society for Promoting the Knowledge of the Christian Religion in the Highlands. For his generous gift, the Assembly of 1719 accorded him a vote of thanks. Doubtless, Hamilton was shown the same kindness, but the claims of his large family would prevent him from disposing of his honorarium in the same liberal fashion. Mitchell, too, is

said to have been the wealthiest minister in the Church. Part of his wealth was inherited. His father left more than £6000.

During the years that follow, while Mitchell was fully occupied with the work of the ministry in Edinburgh and with the general business of the Church, only one other matter claims to be noticed. It is his connection with the second Simson case. In regard to it he took up a very decided attitude of opposition to the accused Professor. Mitchell did not live to see the end of it, but in its earliest stages he showed his disapproval of Simson's teaching. Wodrow says of him :—" In Mr Simson's process he has been most firm and indeed staunch " (*Ana.* iii. 447). When writing in January 1726, to Principal Stirling, Mitchell expressed regret at the rumours current about Simson's Arian views, and requested Stirling to give his opinion about them. His sermon at the opening of the Assembly in the following year has been already referred to. In it his sense of the gravity of the situation in which the Church was placed by the Simson case is clearly seen. It was a grievous loss to the Church that Mitchell was removed by death from its councils before the process instituted against the Glasgow Professor was finally disposed of.

In accordance with instructions given by the August Commission in 1727, Mitchell, accompanied by Professor Hamilton and Principal Hadow, proceeded to London in order to congratulate George II. on his accession to the throne, and to express the Church's loyalty to His Majesty's person and rule. They set out from Edinburgh early in September. Illness of a serious kind seized Mitchell on the way. On the 8th September at York, he died in the thirty-third year of his ministry. The news when it reached Scotland filled the Church with sorrow. " He was one of our chief men, and singularly useful many years," is the way in which Wodrow speaks of him in a letter to Cotton Mather (*Corr.* iii. 329). Elsewhere he says :—" He was a person whose sentiments in our Scots affairs were depended upon very much by our great folk and people at Court. He was a most sufficient Moderator to our Assembly, a very close and home speaker, and an excellent preacher" (*Ana.* iii. 447). " His last sermon before the Assembly," he adds, " is reckoned his dying testimony and legacy to this Church, and Provost Drummond told me he inclined to have it printed."

Mitchell was twice married. His first wife was Margaret Cunningham, widow of James Stewart of Coltness, advocate, and daughter of Hugh Cunningham, Lord Provost of Edinburgh. The *Coltness Collections* rather slightingly say regarding the marriage :—James Stewart's "widow had all or most of their joynt-stock, and after this married with Mr William Mitchell, then minister in Cannongate and next in Edinburgh, who was a celebrated clergyman and knew how to improve his talents, and left or procured a good clear estate to their son, Andrew" (p. 62). The marriage took place on the 14th October 1705. The distinguished career of this son at home and abroad forms one of the most interesting chapters in British history. He has been described as the "best ambassador England ever had." He is specially remembered for his services at the Court of Prussia, where he was held in high esteem by Frederick the Great. The life of Sir Andrew Mitchell of Thainston, for by that title he is best known, has been written by Andrew Bisset, but for the ordinary reader it will be enough to mention the striking encomium paid to him by Carlyle. "One wise thing," he says, "the English have done; sent an Excellency Mitchell, a man of loyalty, of sense and honesty, to be their resident at Berlin. This is the noteworthy, not yet much noted Sir Andrew Mitchell; by far the best Excellency England ever had in that Court. An Aberdeen Scotchman, creditable to his country; hardheaded, sagacious, sceptical of shows; but capable of recognising substances withal, and of standing loyal to them, stubbornly if needful; who grew to a great mutual regard with Friedrich, and well deserved to do so; constantly about him during the next seven years [the Seven Years' War] and whose letters are among the perennially valuable documents on Friedrich's history" (*Frederick the Great*, vii. 31). This is a most worthy record to stand at the credit of a son of the Scottish manse. Sir Andrew married his cousin, Barbara Mitchell, heiress of Thainston. On her death, which took place very shortly after her marriage, the estate passed to her husband. Sir Andrew died at Berlin, without issue, in 1771.

A daughter was likewise born to William Mitchell and his wife. She died in 1726. Reference has already been made to Wodrow's account of her illness, when her father was raised to the Moderator's Chair for the fifth time.

Mitchell was married the second time to Barbara Forbes,

widow of Thomas Mitchell of Thainston, one of the bailies of Aberdeen. The marriage took place at Edinburgh on the 7th July 1723.

Though Mitchell did not issue any publication through the press, he left behind him a note-book in which he entered incidents connected with himself and the affairs of the Church. Mention is made of it in the catalogue of the Forbes of Craigievar MSS. given in the *Fifth Report of the Historical MSS. Commission* (p. 628). From the brief reference made to the contents of the note-book in the *Report*, it would appear that Mitchell had another son, Hugh, who died young. Baron Sempill, who is now in possession of the Craigievar MSS., kindly undertook to search for the volume and allow me to make use of it. His lordship, however, has not been able to discover it. According to the same *Report*, there are also in the custody of Lord Sempill a number of letters from Professor M'Laurin of Edinburgh to his old pupil, Sir Andrew Mitchell. These give information regarding the ministers of Edinburgh. One of them contains an account of the Assembly of 1736, before which Principal Campbell of St Andrews appeared. The correspondence, if published, might throw an interesting light upon some of the Moderators of the period with which we are dealing, as well as upon the general history of the Church.

CHAPTER XV

WILLIAM HAMILTON, MODERATOR, 1712, 1716, 1720, 1727 AND 1730

William Hamilton, one of the leading Churchmen of the early part of the eighteenth century, was the second son of Gavin Hamilton of Airdrie, through whom he was closely related to Sir Robert Hamilton, the well-known laird of Preston. The head of the Airdrie section of the family was a devoted Covenanter, who, resolutely refusing to comply with Episcopacy, associated himself with the wandering field-preachers of the day. In 1651, Gavin accompanied Charles II. on his expedition into England. On his return to Airdrie, he proceeded to burden heavily his patrimonial possessions out of love to the Covenant. From this weight they were never freed. Gavin married his kinswoman, Jane, daughter of Robert Montgomery of Hazlehead. The elder of his two sons, Robert, who succeeded to the estate, was born in 1650, but William, the younger son, never enjoyed his father's care, for Gavin died some little time before the future Principal saw the light. Being thus a posthumous child, he was certain to be the loved treasure of his mother's heart, and the tender care of his stalwart brother, who had already shown the mettle of which he was made by taking part in the battle of Bothwell Bridge. For this, Robert was arrested and carried to Edinburgh, but after a month's imprisonment he was released, on giving security that he would not " rise in arms against his Majesty or his authority." How eagerly the little boy of eight or nine would listen to the story of his big brother's doings! The twenty years which separated the two sons of Gavin Hamilton in age, gave the elder an authority and influence over the younger, which were increased by the fact that Robert stood *in loco parentis* to William on the occasion of his baptism. This must almost be a unique experience. It would not have been fitting for a son of Gavin Hamilton to be baptized by one of the indulged ministers, far less by the local curate.

WILLIAM HAMILTON

Accordingly, William received the initial sacrament of the Church at a conventicle held in 1675. Where this conventicle took place, and who presided at it, we cannot tell. The year only is known. Yet if the year be correctly stated, William Hamilton must have been more than a mere infant at the time. For as his ordination occurred in 1694, he would have been only nineteen years of age when set apart for the work of the ministry, if his birth had happened in 1675. We must think of him, therefore, as a boy of four or five, when the unknown field-preacher poured upon him the symbolic water of baptism. The delay hardly requires explanation. The difficulties and dangers of the time are sufficient to account for it. Frequently at such field-gatherings many little children were baptized. And it need not occasion any surprise that boys and girls were more than two or three years old before a suitable opportunity presented itself of celebrating the holy rite.

The records of the period are silent regarding the education of Hamilton during both its earlier and later stages. It is only known that he passed through the ordinary school and university curriculum, and was in due course licensed to preach the gospel. It may be that he spent some time in Holland. His acquaintance with the Dutch divines, of which there are many proofs, gives support to this belief. On the 26th September 1694, he was ordained to the ministry at Cramond, where he remained for fifteen years, taking full advantage of the quietness and seclusion of his beautiful sea-side parish, in order to acquire those great stores of learning for which he was distinguished in later years. His proximity to Edinburgh gave him access to those libraries which were being formed in the capital, and which even then were among its greatest treasures. To the end of his life, Hamilton was a diligent student of all kinds of literature, giving special attention to English and foreign books dealing with his favourite study of theology. With conspicuous faithfulness, he discharged the duties of a parish minister. In carrying out the recognized discipline of the Church he was most impartial, and the minutes of session tell how he would not allow Sir William Paterson of Granton to escape from it, but visited him with ecclesiastical censure in the ordinary public manner for unworthy conduct. Eighteen months after he entered upon his work at Cramond, Hamilton was married to Mary Robertson of Glasgow.

The scholarly bent of his mind and his studious habits early marked him out as qualified for a Chair of Theology. In due course an opportunity presented itself. Professor George Meldrum died in the opening months of 1709. Hamilton was appointed to the vacant Chair on the 17th August, and on the 21st September he was loosed from his charge in Cramond. A question at once arose regarding the wisdom of inducting him at the same time to one of the city churches, the patronage of which was held by the Magistrates and Council. The death of Meldrum had created a vacancy in the Tron Church. A feeling, however, had grown up against the union of a professor's chair and a city pulpit. Hitherto it had been the custom to make every professor of divinity a minister in full charge of a congregation at the same time. Two reasons could be given for this course. One was the insufficiency of the professorial salary to maintain the occupant of the Chair in a fitting way. The other was that it was certainly no disadvantage for a teacher of theology to be in living touch with the actual work of attending to the needs of a congregation. Even Carstares when Principal was a city minister. The desire that Hamilton should devote the whole of his strength to the work of his professorship, induced the Town Council to separate the two offices. Accordingly they resolved, as we read in their minutes, that "Mr Hamilton should have no ministerial charge." They followed up this resolution by arranging that the salary of the new Professor should be raised to 4000 merks Scots. The separation of these offices was a most desirable thing, especially when we remember that Hamilton, at one period at least during his tenure of the Chair, had the charge of 200 students. Nine years later, the opponents of this change sought to put Hamilton into a city church, but the proposal was set aside on the ground that "having such weighty employment on his hands in his present station, he cannot be thought willing or capable to discharge even half a ministerial charge." Another reason was given why the new arrangement should continue. The city fathers cautiously added that if elected to a parish Hamilton would "be in danger of being overloaded with a whole charge, seeing in the event of the Professor of History's demise, he must needs take both charges upon him, in case his Majesty should present a layman to the Professorship of History, or the person he presents be

disqualified for the ministry of this city, for want of that fluency of expression and justness of thought which is needful and requisite."

The manner in which Hamilton conducted the work of his class secured for him widespread admiration in the Church, while his students almost universally entertained for him feelings of respect and affection. Principal Leechman of Glasgow was one of his students. Here is the way in which he speaks of him :—" I have heard Dr Leechman say," writes his biographer, Wodrow of Stevenston, " that he was under great obligations to Professor Hamilton, that he learned much from him in many points about which the Professor spoke his mind openly, and that young as he was, he learned something also in other points about which the Professor said nothing. The silence of such a man struck him, and led him to investigate the causes of it " (p. 4). Ramsay of Ochtertyre, in his valuable *Memoirs*, records that " Mr William Hamilton, Professor of Divinity in the College of Edinburgh, was a man exceedingly beloved and respected. For a number of years he was supposed to be the chief leader of the General Assembly, where his wisdom and moderation procured him the esteem of contending parties. If the report of the aged may be believed, none was ever better qualified to discharge the important trust of a Professor of Divinity. There was a sincerity, a kindness and a vein of liberality in all he did and said, that gained him the hearts of his students and made them enter with warmth into his views and sentiments. All of them professed through life the highest veneration for the memory of this excellent man, whom they took for a model. When canvassing the discourses delivered in the Divinity Hall, it was also his duty to make remarks upon the language, lopping off luxuriances, and reprehending with kind severity everything that savoured of bombast and vulgarity " (i. 227). The writer of a brief sketch of Hamilton's career in the *Christian Instructor* for 1826, thus sums up his estimate of his abilities :—" Dr Hamilton brought to the duties of the Chair a powerful and comprehensive mind, extensive and accurate learning, a thorough knowledge of ecclesiastical affairs, particularly those of his own Church, and habits of diligent research and persevering activity." Another historian testifies that " in discharging the duties of his Chair, he peculiarly endeared himself to the students under his care by his kindness, candour

and affability, acquiring for himself the highest reputation among his contemporaries for piety and theological erudition" (Anderson's *Scot. Nation*). Testimonies of this nature leave no room to doubt that the patrons of the Divinity Chair secured for it the ablest man in Scotland. In accordance with the general method of teaching then adopted in the Faculty of Theology, Hamilton made use of one or other of the text-books drawn up by Continental divines, adding comments of his own. At the same time he examined the students *vivâ voce*, and appointed discourses to be delivered by them in his presence and criticized by him.

A very kindly trait in his character is set before us in Somerville's *Life and Times*. The well-known minister of Jedburgh was on very intimate terms with Hamilton's son, Robert, afterwards Professor of Divinity in Edinburgh. Robert mentioned to his friend the pleasing fact that his father "had been in the use of recommending to his students, at the conclusion of their course, to maintain a tender and charitable respect towards their fathers in the Church, who had not enjoyed the means of acquiring the literature and liberality of sentiment, so amply provided in the more happy times in which their own lot had been cast" (p. 64). A story of this kind makes it easy for us to understand the great popularity which Hamilton enjoyed throughout the Church.

This part of his work, too, provides us with an interesting reminiscence of James Thomson, the poet. The author of *The Seasons*, when a young man, had turned his attention to theology, purposing to follow in the steps of his father, the minister of Ednam. He attended the class taught by Hamilton. One of his latest biographers, William Bayne, thus records the story:—"It was at the close of this year [1724], that the celebrated incident happened which affords some tangible reason for the abrupt change which [Thomson] was about to make in his profession. Professor Hamilton, who occupied the Chair of Divinity, gave Thomson as a subject either for a lecture or a sermon, a text from one of the Psalms. The result was a very poetical and ornate treatment of his theme. Mr Hamilton saw no merit in this line of exposition. According to Dr Johnson, he censured Thomson's dissertation as 'too flowery and redundant,' and went the length of stamping one expression as bordering on profanity." No doubt, Mr Bayne adds, this had the effect

of making Thomson give up all thoughts of the ministry (p. 40). Two versions of the theme set by Hamilton are given. One states it was the 23rd Psalm, the other says the 103rd. That, however, is of little consequence. We are interested only in the Professor's criticism. Dr Johnson's statement is as follows :—" Thomson lived at Edinburgh at a school without distinction or expectation, till at the usual time he performed a probationary exercise by explaining a Psalm. His diction was so poetically splendid that Mr Hamilton, the Professor of Divinity, reproved him for speaking language unintelligible to a popular audience, and he censured one of his expressions as indecent, if not profane. This rebuke is reported to have suppressed his thoughts of an ecclesiastical character." An anonymous life of the poet, in referring to the incident, tells us that " Hamilton complimented Thomson on his performance, praising the striking portions of it, but added he would require to keep a stricter rein on his imagination, if he wished to be intelligible to a congregation." Of course, if there was any expression in Thomson's discourse unworthy of the sacredness of his theme, it was only the duty of the Professor to point it out, and Thomson was doubtless wisely guided in turning aside from the path of the ministry; but Hamilton must not be understood as objecting to the display of poetic fancy even in sermons, or to the use of choice and finished literary phrases. He was too good a scholar himself to take up that ground. Probably all he meant to do was to warn Thomson that in the pulpit, words must be spoken which can be " understanded of the common people." Johnson himself would have agreed with this counsel, for to Boswell on one occasion he remarked :—" When your Scottish clergy give up their homely manner, religion will soon decay in that country."

Though so popular with the Church at large, and so endeared to his students, Hamilton found his method of expressing his views on certain points regarded in some quarters with suspicion. The remark of Leechman, already quoted, helps to show us how his silence on some topics may have been misinterpreted. Silence on the part of a professor has not been unknown in Scotland in more modern times, and possibly it has stimulated inquiry in the minds of students more thoroughly than dogmatic assertion would have done. At the same time, it is calculated to teach them a measure of humility, to which they might not otherwise have attained.

Yet such silence has its disadvantages, and Hamilton was made to reap them.

It was in connection with the Simson controversy, in which he could not help taking part, that some people found Hamilton wanting. So much was this the case, that it has been boldly said by one historian, that " Dr William Hamilton was a zealous Moderate, who contrived to train up a race of heterodox ministers, by maintaining an ominous silence in reference to various doctrines of the gospel " (Reid's *Presb. Church in Ireland.* iii. 327). This is a serious charge, for which there seems to be no real ground. Webster, the antagonist of Simson, would not have left the Edinburgh professor alone if such a taint of heresy pervaded his teaching. Wodrow thus expresses the feeling entertained by some in regard to Hamilton :—" The Professor is beginning to be much suspected by his favouring Mr Simson, though I know, as far as I can guess, he declines to dip into hazardous points (*Ana.* iii. 485). And again :—" The set of young men and preachers come from his hand for many years, if they have learned their way and principles from him, is not a good *vidimus* of their master. In short he does not appear to be firm " (*Ana.* iv. 139). Wodrow further tells us :—" Allan Logan takes exception to Professor Hamilton not insisting, according to a student's report, on the necessity of believing the Trinity. In criticizing the discourse of a student, he cautioned his class against too much positiveness, since good and great men could not satisfy themselves in that matter " (*Ana.* iii. 302). Patrick Walker likewise charges Hamilton with calling his version of Peden's *Notes on the Covenant of Redemption* blasphemous.

Now it is hardly possible to say how much importance is to be attached to such statements. They may be mere gossip. It is unfortunate, too, that we are unable to appeal on any large scale to documentary evidence, as the only publication which came from the pen of Hamilton is a sermon which appeared shortly before his death. But Wodrow himself may be summoned as a witness in the Professor's favour. In speaking of Hamilton's sermon at the opening of the Assembly of 1728, Wodrow tells us that " here he entered upon the subject everybody knows is before the Assembly, the matter of the Trinity, which more than once he asserted to be a fundamental of our faith, and what ought with the greatest zeal and earnestness to be looked after ;

and added that this was consistent with all due regard to private and personal rights, and God's service could not possibly be promoted by any personal real injuries." On a similar occasion in 1731, Hamilton "had several open declarations as to Christ's Divinity." These comments cannot be set aside. They express Wodrow's opinion of Hamilton's doctrinal views, and show as far as these two sermons are concerned, that the minister of Eastwood and the Edinburgh professor were at one.

Yet there cannot be any doubt that Hamilton did not take up a very pronounced attitude of opposition to Simson, and was willing to put the most generous interpretation upon his words. Thus in a debate in the case in the Assembly of 1728, in connection with the doctrine of the "Necessary Existence and Independence of Christ," he is reported to have said :—"If eight witnesses deponed somewhat relative to a conversation, that a man had said it was lawful to kill his neighbour, and two witnesses mentioned at the same time that he added *in self-defence*, he would be inclined to hope that what was said was not criminal," so he argued that "he found [Simson's] words indeed proven, but conceived they might be detached words, and only part of a sentence, and unless we had the full conversation it was hard for him to satisfy himself so as to be found proven" (*Wodrow Corr.* iii. 348). At another time in the same Assembly, "he said that indeed he thought there was a censure due to Mr Simson for the things found relevant and proven, but several things, when he balanced the weakness and degree of proof with the guilt relevant, stuck with him" (*ibid.* 378). All this shows how Hamilton was ready to place the largest possible construction on the words of his brother professor, while he conserved at the same time the truths which Simson seemingly, and doubtless really impugned. Eventually Hamilton was quite convinced of the necessity of the removal of Simson from his Chair, and supported the motion for his suspension. He strongly asserted, however, that he would not acquiesce in a vote for his deposition. In the Committee which finally discussed the matter, with a view to a unanimous finding on the part of the Assembly, Wodrow says, "we were choaked with threatenings of breaches and dissents on all hands, from Professor Hamilton, etc., on the one hand, and Mr Allan Logan and Colonel Erskine on the other." A ballad of the day hit somewhat cleverly his supposed sympathy with the Glasgow heretic.

"When a certain Professor Hamilton, e'en just such another,
For Simson made flourishing speeches,
The same turn of thought made him plead for his brother
With far greater zeal than he preaches.
And what though his conduct gives ground to suspect him,
He hath grasped such exorbitant sway,
As he hopes may suffice to defend and protect him
'Gainst all his opposers can say."

This lampoon, from which other verses are quoted elsewhere, is entitled *An Answer to John Brig's Ballads*, by two authors, named Crawford and Stewart, and may be found in the notes to Lord Grange's *Diary* (p. 92).

Though the theological position of Hamilton did not commend itself to a certain section in the Church, an effective reason for believing in his orthodoxy is afforded by the friendship which existed between him and Boston. The *Memoirs* of the minister of Ettrick are full of references to him, and on all occasions Hamilton is alluded to with respect and confidence. Boston consulted him on a work he was preparing on Hebrew accents. In 1726 he writes :—" I waited on Mr William Hamilton, Professor of Theologie in the College of Edinburgh ; who, notwithstanding our late differences in the affair of the *Marrow*, treated me very civilly. And having desired him to revise [the essay], he readily consented thereto." A little later he says :—" I received a letter from Professor Hamilton aforesaid anent the essay on the accentuation. And for some time thereafter, letters passed 'twixt us on that matter. His letters were very civil, but gave little encouragement." " On the 26th June 1727," he continues, " I wrote him a large answer. The Professor's letter was very civil and wary, and did much raise my esteem of him ; but withal it had no favourable aspect on the business." In the following year, Hamilton seems to have looked on Boston's effort with a kindlier eye, for the *Memoirs* contain this statement, which he evidently penned with great delight : —" A little before that I had received a letter in Latin from Professor Hamilton, bearing that he found nothing in the essay on the accentuation, contrary to the doctrine of the Reformed Churches ; and that it was not unworthy of the notice of the learned, in case of publication. These two things I had expressly desired of him, if he could have freedom to testify the same ; and according to my desire he gave me the letter foresaid." But the most convincing proof of Hamilton's loyalty to evangelical doctrine is given in the

account of an interview Boston had with him during the Assembly of 1729. "Saturday, the 17th," he says, "being the first free day to me, I had a conversation with Professor Hamilton, who ingenuously declared to me his satisfaction with what we called the deed of gift, and his conviction that the gospel could not be preached without it; and that of his own accord." Boston was not a man to keep himself on terms of intimacy with one of whose sympathy with the cardinal truths of revelation he was not thoroughly assured. A final testimony to the esteem in which Hamilton was held, and doubtless it bears, too, upon his theological opinions, is afforded by the statement of Ebenezer Erskine, who in speaking of some of the anti-Marrow men, like Hamilton and Goudie, does not hesitate to call them "great and good men" (*Gospel Truth* p. 32).

The important place which Hamilton occupied in the Church is clearly indicated by his frequent election to the Moderator's Chair. He was raised to this honourable position on five occasions. In this he was equalled by William Wisheart and William Mitchell. With Mitchell, he shared for several years the leadership of the Church, and after Mitchell's death he was generally recognized as the wisest and safest adviser the Church possessed. At the same time, his frequent summons to preside over the deliberations of the General Assembly was not regarded in every quarter as helpful to the true interests of the Church. And certainly it had its drawbacks. Strenuous objection to it was taken in an anonymous letter, which proceeded in 1721 from the pen of Gabriel Wilson of Maxton. It bore the title of *A Letter to a Gentleman in Edinburgh, a Ruling Elder of the Church of Scotland, concerning the Proceedings of the last General Assembly*, and purported to come from an outsider. Regarding this matter of ringing the changes upon a few men he says:—"We're a little concerned for the low condition your Church seems of late years to be reduced to, visible in her paucity of men fit for the Chair. For if the necessitous state of the Church did not call for it, 'tis not to be supposed those two or three good men, who have filled it by turns these many years, would so industriously detain that honour to themselves. The choosing of a M—d—r may to some seem a matter of small consequence, but you may by this time be satisfied, it has no small influence upon your affairs. For he, after a sort, holds the balance which ought to be done

with the utmost exactness, and may if he is not a very fair dealer, convey undue weights, or fall with his own weight into the one scale. By which means that side may be made lightest which should and otherwise would be heaviest. And a balance of deceit is anywhere you know, but especially in the sanctuary, an abomination to the Lord." Be that as it may, the fact that Hamilton was Moderator so often points to the confidence which he inspired in the Church, and his capacity to deal with the difficult questions which presented themselves at the time for solution. The dates on which he enjoyed the highest honour the ecclesiastical world could bestow were 1712, 1716, 1720, 1727 and 1730.

Six names were proposed for the Moderatorship in 1712. The final vote lay between Principal Wisheart and Professor Hamilton, who secured the election by six or seven votes. Wodrow has no printed note on the election of Hamilton in 1716, but he says about him in 1720 :—" Mr Hamilton was chosen Moderator very unanimously." In 1727 he records that Hamilton " carried it by nineteen, or as the Clerk had it, twenty-one." In opening the Assembly in the following year, Hamilton preached from James iii. 17, " The wisdom that is from above." " He insisted on the improvement very seriously," we are told, " that ministers should preach that wisdom with its characters [purity, etc.], and that they should practise it themselves, and especially in judicatories " (Wodrow, *Corr.* iii. 337). It is not needful to dwell on the various items which came up at those Assemblies over which Hamilton presided. They included The Abjuration Oath, The Act of Toleration, The Revival of Patronage, The Simson Case, and The Marrow Controversy. In guiding the Supreme Court of the Church through the intricacies of these questions, it is enough to say that Hamilton displayed a calmness and wisdom which gained for him the approbation of the Assembly. In connection with Hamilton's sermon as retiring Moderator in 1731, in the midst of the Simson controversy, Wodrow makes the pathetic remark :— " Ministers are to be pityed who preach on such occasions " (*Ana.* iv. 237).

It was only natural from the prominence held by Hamilton, that he was sent several times to the Court at London to fulfil official duty in the name of the Church. His first visit took place in connection with the Oath of Abjuration. His fellow-deputy was Mr Mitchell. In writing to Principal

Stirling on the 28th February 1717, Hamilton says :—" We have had the honour of being introduced to the King, Prince and Princess, and hope to send a full account thereof to Mr Wisheart next post." As the deputies were returning home, they found it necessary for some reason to take one of the stages on Sabbath, " travelling post on that day, with the horn sounding before them." The matter was brought before the Presbytery of Edinburgh, who asked the brethren for an explanation of their conduct. In reply they stated that on their arrival one Saturday night at Stilton, they could find no accommodation except in a public-house. At the same time, Stilton could not provide them with a suitable [*i.e.* non-Episcopalian] place of worship. In these circumstances they had been induced to go next morning to Stamford where they could join in the service of God's house. As they were upon post horses, it was a matter of course and needful for safety that they should have a boy blowing a horn. The Presbytery expressed satisfaction with the explanation given, and passed from the matter. Sturdy James Webster, however, was unwilling to let it drop, and it is said referred to it in time of public prayer. For this audacious proceeding he was rebuked by the Presbytery. It is well to bear in mind, when we think of the system of discipline in existence in the eighteenth century, that two distinguished men in the Church, both of them Moderators, had their conduct called in question. In this case at least, the Presbyterian Church showed itself to be no respecter of persons. The old Covenanting party, however, did not let the subject drop. Clarkson, in his *Plain Reasons*, sets it forth as a grievance against the Established Church as late as 1731.

Another official visit was paid by Hamilton to London in 1725. Wodrow, writing to him on the 25th January of that year, says :—" Yours of the 16th was extremely welcome, containing a great many of our own little affairs which I did not know ; and your accounts from London are curious and most obliging. I am truly ashamed to ask the continuance of them, because I well know your load of letters and other business. Allow me to long for your accounts of the lecture at Old Jewry." Three years later we find Hamilton in the south again, on Church business. On the 20th January 1728, he wrote from Edinburgh whither he had returned, to his friend at Eastwood :—" When I look upon the date of yours, the 20th ult., I am sensible I ought to begin with an apology

for being so long of answering it. My being late in coming home has brought upon me a greater throng of business than usual. My time was so much taken up at London about public business, I had very little to spare for private conversation or making enquiry as to what was doing in matters of learning" (*Christian Instructor*, xxv).

While Hamilton was engaged in his professorial work and in the affairs of the Church, certain honours in addition to the Moderator's Chair came to him. In 1713, in succession to John Law, he was appointed almoner to Queen Anne. George I. continued him in this office, but in 1726 the king took the very unusual step of removing him from it. Wodrow thus speaks of the incident:—"Mr William Hamilton is turned out from being King's Almoner, for which he has about forty pounds stg. or less. His numerous family, small stipend as Professor, and long services and universal usefulness, make this very surprising" (*Ana.* iii. 320). The reason of Hamilton's loss of royal favour cannot now be determined, but there can be no doubt that he would feel deeply the slight cast upon him. As far as we know, no other occupant of the office had to yield up its honour and emoluments in this fashion. In the following year, however, George II. made some amends for the action of his father, by conferring upon Hamilton the dignity of one of his Majesty's chaplaincies. A further academic prize was bestowed on him in 1730, when he was elected to the Principalship of the University in succession to Wisheart. He continued to hold along with it the Chair of Divinity.

For twenty-three years Hamilton devoted himself to the teaching of theology. The strain of professorial work, however, began to tell upon him. It is reported that he was becoming "weary of teaching." Whatever the reason may have been, we find him taking a very unusual course in 1732. He resigned his Chair in order to accept full ministerial duty in the city charge, known as the New North Church. It would perhaps be hard to find a parallel instance in Scottish Church History of a Professor of Theology, over sixty years of age, giving up his post in order to undertake the spiritual oversight of a large congregation. This, however, Hamilton did. On the 8th August 1732, he was inducted to the New North. He continued to hold the office of Principal at the same time; but the end was not long in coming. On the 12th November of the same year, only three months after he

entered upon his new work, he died in the thirty-ninth year of his ministry.

During the whole of his career, Hamilton kept himself in touch with the world of literature. Two of his letters preserved in the *Christian Instructor* of 1826, give full proof of his keen interest in many subjects. " I have not much from London of any considerable books published of late," he wrote in 1727. His views of the mystic, William Law, are of interest. " Mr Law, a non-jurant, has published a book on *Christian Perfection* which there is a considerable demand for. He carries the subject very high as to the necessity of it in order to salvation." Of the Abbé Houtteville's " fine book," entitled *Verité de la Religion Chrétienne prouvée par les faits*, he speaks in the most eulogistic way. " I have not seen a Popish writer so free from trash as he is." We find him referring in the same letter to his perusal of recently published works like Collins' *Scheme of Literal Prophecy*, Prebendary Thomas Burnet's Boyle Lecture on *The Demonstration of True Religion*, Dr Thomas Burnet's *De Fide et Officiis Christianorum* and his *De Statu Mortuorum et Resurgentium.* Of the last book he gives a full and instructive account. His antagonism to Arianism comes out in his strictures upon *An Essay for the Demonstration of the Scriptural Trinity*, which he calls " the grossest Arianism of any modern production I have met with." He likewise states that " one Mr Lardner, a man of great character among the Dissenters, has printed a book on the truth of the New Testament history. I find it here in the shops, but have not had time to read it."

Hamilton carried on a large correspondence with theologians on the Continent. " I have had no foreign letter," he writes early in 1728, " since November, and my last from Leyden had little—only a hot dispute between Veselig, Professor there, and Jablonski at Frankfort on Oder, the former refuting and the other defending Nestorius." And again :—" I hear a copy of a new book is sent me from Holland, an account of the present state of the Protestant Churches in Hungary, by one Varga, a native of Hungary, who was here as a student some years ago, but it is not yet come to hand." The reference to a foreign student in Edinburgh is interesting. Scotland at this time was repaying part of the debt it contracted during the persecution, when many of its students of theology went to Holland. It is

said that the uncertain position taken up by the Church in the Simson case, stopped the flow of foreign students to Edinburgh. The following extract shows Hamilton's interest in science. "I have read Dr Pemberton's view of Sir Isaac Newton's philosophy, but do not think it answers the design of making it intelligible to persons of ordinary capacity, who are unacquainted with philosophy and mathematics."

It is to be regretted that one who was so able a teacher and so prominent a Churchman, has left behind him no printed works beyond a sermon preached from Phil. iii. 7-8, before the Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge, and entitled *The Truth and Excellency of the Christian Religion.* It appeared in 1732. The well-known J. O. in the *Christian Instructor* of 1826, thus refers to it:—"The introduction consists of but one sentence, 'The truth and excellency of the Christian religion is what I propose to discourse of, which will afford ground for such exhortations as the solemn occasion requires; the subject is exceeding great; May God enable me to speak of it, and you to hear as becometh; and that by the gracious assistance of His Holy Spirit.' Then he proceeds first to show the truth of the Christian religion, and particularly how its excellency proves its truth; secondly, to enlarge a little more upon some particular heads, wherein its excellency appears; and thirdly, to draw suitable inferences with respect to the subject and occasion of the meeting. All these topics he illustrates with distinctness and judgment, and one great excellence of the sermon is that it has a heart as well as a head. He powerfully enforces in conclusion the necessity of faith in the great essentials of the gospel, and of holy submission to all its practical requirements." One quotation may be given from the sermon, because it shows us possibly the manner in which Hamilton carried on the apologetical part of his professorial work. He is arguing in support of the excellency of the gospel from its evident truthfulness, and tries to show how we are shut up to the belief that the facts recorded in the gospel are reliable. The principal facts, he says, are "that in one of the most noted eras of time, in the reigns of Augustus and Tiberius, Roman emperors, appeared in Judea a Person, who preached and wrought innumerable miracles in the view of multitudes—friends and enemies; that He was cruelly put to the infamous death of a cross by the Jews; that He rose again from the dead the third day; that according as He had promised, he

endowed His disciples with power from on high, and sent them forth to witness His resurrection, and confirm their testimony by the miraculous powers He had given them. In all this, it was impossible they could be deceived themselves, by fancying they had these powers, if they had them not, nor could they deceive others who were witnesses of the exercise of them, such as speaking with tongues they had never learned, healing all manner of diseases, and even raising the dead, and communicating these powers to others by laying their hands on them. I say these facts so attested, had they not been true, it appeareth absolutely impossible in the nature of things, that they could ever have gained credit among men, but on the contrary, must have exposed the asserters of them to the utmost ridicule, and made them the scorn of mankind. . . . We see Christianity not only gained belief in these circumstances, which belief proves that the facts must have been notoriously true ; nor among a few only of those of the meaner sort, but with a prodigious swiftness and rapidity, it flew over all the parts of the known world, and was embraced by men of all degrees ; and that it was so is no wonder, excepting in this that the wonders of God were everywhere visible to gain credit to the testimony of the apostles and first preachers of Christ."

At the close of the sermon, he strongly urges the claims of the Society in behalf of which he was preaching. With honest bluntness, too, he makes an attack on the selfish mode of living which seemed to prevail, dwelling on the "luxury of furniture, tables and dress, and on those public diversions that are so expensive, would to God they were harmless in other respects." This sermon, which bears no trace of sympathy with the views of Simson of Glasgow, leaves no doubt in our minds that Hamilton was a preacher of ability and of remarkable outspokenness.

As Hamilton died before the controversy which ended in the Secession became acute, it is not possible to say how he might have guided the course of events. Certainly he was a man of wide sympathies. He had, moreover, taken up an attitude of strong opposition to the existence of patronage. Accordingly, it is just possible that with his great foresight and calm judgment, he would have been able to rule the Assembly so wisely as to devise some *via media*, by which the active leaven of Evangelicalism, associated with the names of the Erskines, might have been retained within the Church

of Scotland. No other man like him was left in the Church, with an influence arising at once from ripe scholarship, lofty character and winsome disposition. Had Hamilton not passed away, the Secession might have been averted.

Hamilton had a large family. Sixteen children were born to him. His wife survived him for many years. She died on the 22nd January 1760, at the age of eighty-five. Two of his sons became ministers of Cramond. Both of them likewise, in due course, occupied the Moderator's Chair—Robert, Professor of Divinity, in 1754 and again in 1760, and Gilbert in 1768. Another of his sons, Gavin, a bookseller in Edinburgh, during an illness made, with the help of a carpenter, a model of the New Town with proposed improvements. Gavin, likewise, as the youngest bailie at the time, took part in dealing with the Porteous mob, and had to superintend the taking down of Porteous' body from the dyer's pole on which he was hanged. In 1745 he was the oldest bailie in the city, and strenuously supported the cause of the Crown. He ran great risk, and had to fly for his life. He married Miss Balfour of Pilrig.

One of the daughters of the Principal, Anna, became the wife of the Rev. John Horsley, rector of Newington in Surrey. She was the mother of Samuel Horsley, the well-known Bishop of St Asaph. A grandson, Robert Hamilton, became the distinguished occupant of the Chair of Mathematics in Aberdeen, and is still remembered for his great work, *An Inquiry concerning the National Debt of Great Britain.* Other descendants of William Hamilton attained to some degree of fame, but it is impossible to notice them all. It will suffice to mention a few. A grand-daughter, Grizel, was married to Benjamin Bell of Edinburgh, the first holder of a name which has shone with lustre in the annals of surgery. Another grand-daughter became the wife of the Rev. James Wodrow of Stevenston. Professor Cleghorn, who was appointed to the Chair of Moral Philosophy in Edinburgh in 1745, Professor Swan, who held the Chair of Natural Philosophy in St Andrews from 1859 to 1880, and Alexander Thomson of Banchory, the ardent supporter of the Free Church in 1843, could claim lineal descent from him. The first Baron Moncreiff and the first Lord Kinross, both of whom had distinguished careers in the Scottish courts of law, were connected with him by marriage. It is also interesting to notice that Sir William Hamilton, the famous

occupant of the Chair of Logic and Metaphysics in the University of Edinburgh, traced his origin from Robert Hamilton of Airdrie, William's elder brother. As some of the Principal's family emigrated to America, it may be assumed that he has representatives to-day on the other side of the Atlantic.

We have no material from which to construct a picture of Principal Hamilton's home life. He seems, however, to have had the gift of humour. Wodrow records an incident which he heard from his lips. "Mr William Hamilton," he says, "tells a story of a dog that was judicially tryed and condemned by the Magistrates of Edinburgh upon a complaint of Major Johnston. The dog belonged to a Whig family at Edinburgh and was a large mastiff, and had a peculiar dislike at red, and would never suffer the soldiers to enter the house, where it was alledged conventicles were keeped. Mr Johnston made a complaint to the magistrates, and the dog was condemned to dye, without hearing his master in his defence" (*Ana.* ii. 378).

Another story has come down, though my informant, the Rev. Benjamin Bell, is uncertain whether it is to be attributed to the Principal or to his son, Robert, who afterwards occupied the Chair of Divinity. The story is this. When troubled with insubordination in his class, Hamilton sometimes made use of the phrase—"Come to the years of discretion." A forward student, on one occasion when questions were invited on the lectures, asked—"When may a man be said to have arrived at the years of discretion?" The answer quickly came to the discomfiture of the young aspirant:—"Some sooner, and some later, but some never at all." Wodrow gives us another personal touch about Hamilton when he says that every year he warned "his scholars in a stated discourse against the haranging way of preaching, and several other novelties" (*Ana.* iii. 485). To preach in a "haranging way" was to deliver a sermon which had no divisions—a style of pulpit oratory which had been adopted by the "Scots Cicero," Hugh Binning, and also by Archbishop Leighton.

The portrait of Hamilton which has come down to us with its gentle, youthful look, corresponds with the description given of him in the verses written in memory of James Smith, his successor in the Principal's Chair. For the elegist graphically speaks of him as "mitis Hamiltonus."

CHAPTER XVI

JAMES GRIERSON, MODERATOR, 1719

Materials for a sketch of the life of James Grierson, who presided over the Assembly of 1719, are extremely meagre. He does not seem to have taken an active part in the general business of the Church, but rather to have confined himself to the fulfilment of his parish duties. The election of a minister to the Chair of the Supreme Court, who thus busied himself almost completely with the work of his own charge, is noteworthy. It shows how the Church could recognize the worth of men who did not strive or lift up their voice in the street, but patiently and diligently attended to the ministry to which they were appointed. James Grierson was of this stamp.

We first meet with him on the day of his ordination at Wemyss, in 1698. His earlier career is a complete blank, so far as we know. Yet at the time of his settlement he had passed his thirty-sixth birthday. The year of his birth, accordingly, corresponded with the promulgation of the Black Act of 1662, which sent so many ministers adrift from Church and home. He may be supposed to have had some experience of the troubles of the persecuting period. Claverhouse, Dalzell and Turner were familiar names to him, while the sufferings of the heroes of the Covenant, Peden and Cameron, Fraser and Hog, could not fail to awaken in his mind an admiration for those truths which enabled men to face danger and even death itself. But the home of Grierson's boyhood and the school of his youth are alike hidden from us.

His ordination to the parish of Wemyss, with its historic and picturesque village, took place on the 22nd September. One of his predecessors had been the great George Gillespie, after whom, till Grierson was settled, eight ministers had occupied the pulpit in turn. The best known of these was Alexander Monro, who became Principal of the University of Edinburgh, and who was forced to leave that office at the

Revolution. The parishioners of Wemyss could not complain of the undue length of any pastorate among them—the average length of ministry during the period mentioned being less than eight years. Grierson's immediate predecessor was Thomas Black, who went to Perth, and who occupied the Chair of the Assembly in 1721.

For a short time after the settlement of Grierson at Wemyss, Thomas Halyburton resided in the parish, as tutor in the family of Wemyss. Yet Halyburton, with that strange unwillingness to mention individuals which characterizes so many of the autobiographies of the time, does not once bring into his narrative the name of the new minister, whose ordination services he doubtless attended. Nor does he say a word about the nature of the preaching of Grierson. Halyburton was passing through his great spiritual change at the time, and apparently he fought his battle alone, confiding to none his difficulties and appealing to none for help. Sadly he says :—"I had no friend to whom I could with freedom and with any prospect of satisfaction impart my mind ; 'Woe to him that is alone when he falleth, for he hath not another to help him up.'" But why did he not go to Grierson? Was he too much of a stranger to make him feel at ease in pouring out his soul to him, or did Halyburton think that Grierson's preaching in public held out little hope that he could benefit him in private? And yet, he gives as "a discernible difference" between his old state and the new life which by and by came to him, the interest he began to take in the "ordinances of the Lord's appointment. It made me follow after discoveries of the Lord's glory in them, and discoveries from him of myself, my case, my sin, my duty." From such confessions we may judge that he did not find the ministry of Grierson fruitless during the few months he continued in Wemyss.

The Town Council of Edinburgh apparently had a good deal to do with the appointment of the ministers of Wemyss. They presented Gillespie to the parish in 1638. They acted as patrons, too, in filling up the vacancies of 1678, 1683 and 1686, and likewise in 1781, 1785 and 1819. But at the time of Grierson's election, patronage was abolished, and so we read that he was duly called by the people. He was at once thrown into touch with the family of the Earl of Wemyss, who at that time was the great landowner in the district. With the members of this family he always remained on most

intimate terms. Proof of this is given in the incident which follows.

In February 1700, a most distressing accident cast its dark shadow around the house of Wemyss. The wife of Lord Elcho, the heir to the earldom, was so severely burned, that she speedily succumbed to the injuries she had received. Wodrow in his *Select Biographies*, gives this account of the fatal event, under the title of *A Relation of my Lady Anne Elcho, about her being burnt*, 13th *February*. "Mr Grierson, being then at Edinburgh, could not attend her." Five days later he wrote :—" Mr Grierson was with her, having come from Edinburgh upon the first account of what had befallen her. He attended her very closely until February 19th, when he again went to Edinburgh. She bore him a particular respect, and expressed no less that first morning she was ill" (ii. 515). It must have been very pressing business which took him off to Edinburgh at such a time. But it is good to have the testimony of such a witness as Lady Elcho to the value of Grierson. The pathetic death of Lady Elcho afforded an attractive subject to the rhyming elegists of the day. Poetry of this kind, in memory of it, was hawked about the streets of Edinburgh :—

> " Were it the custom now to canonise,
> We might her in the alb of saints comprise.
> She either was as free from faults as they,
> Or had she faults, the flame purged these away."

Of Lord Elcho the poet goes on to say—

> " Only well-grounded hopes of her blest state
> Can his excessive agonies abate,
> And the two hopeful boys she left behind
> May mitigate the sorrows of his mind."

It is interesting to remember that the story of Lady Elcho, as recorded in Wodrow's *Biographies*, is from the pen of Thomas Halyburton.

After being in Wemyss for twelve years, Grierson left for Edinburgh, to one of whose charges he was elected in December 1709. Before he bade farewell to his country parish, however, he came into contact with Halyburton once more. They were both members of the same Synod. Halyburton was appointed Professor of Divinity in St Andrews. He did not care to take upon himself the responsibility of determining to leave his church in Ceres. He

threw it upon the Presbytery. They in turn referred the matter to the Synod of Fife, which met at St Andrews in April 1710. Grierson acted as Moderator. The case was fully debated from every point of view. It fell to the Moderator to intimate to Halyburton the decision of the Court, which was unanimously in favour of his translation. Halyburton himself tells us that this "was done with a convincing light by Mr Grierson, the Moderator, *pro tempore*."

It was Trinity College Church to which Grierson was elected in Edinburgh. There seems to have been some delay in carrying out the appointment. The matter came up before the Assembly. Wodrow thus reports the case:—"May 2, 1710. This afternoon the Assembly met, and they had a long process of transportation of Mr James Grierson from Weems to Edinburgh; and because he was willing in some measure to be out of that place, he was transported" (*Corr.* i. 140). To his new charge he was inducted in due course, and in it he remained to the end of his life.

Grierson was on terms of ministerial communion with Ebenezer Erskine. Fraser, in his life of the leader of the Secession, thus refers to a visit paid by him to Edinburgh, at the time of the celebration of the Lord's Supper on the 4th March 1711. "He lodged in the house of a friend, Janet Paterson, who noticed him a little depressed on Sabbath morning, and reminded him of a text, which had often helped her, 'The meek shall eat and be satisfied.' The first words Mr Grier[son] gave out at the singing after the sermon were these." This, we are told, melted Erskine's heart (p. 165).

Grierson likewise was one of the correspondents of Wodrow. "Our Commissioners," he wrote to the minister of Eastwood on the 13th January 1715, "returned from London on Monday, and give a very comfortable account of the King, Prince and Princess, particularly of their real affection to our Church, which is now in very much credit and esteem with all the King's friends" (Wodrow, *Corr.* ii. 27).

Growing steadily in reputation among his brethren, Grierson was called to the Chair of the Assembly nine years after his arrival in Edinburgh. He had been in the ministry for twenty-one years. Of his opening address from the Chair, Wodrow remarks:—"The Moderator, Mr James Grierson, who was very unanimously chosen, had his speech wherein he took notice of the remarkable providences in delivering us from the attack from Spain, and delivered himself very

well. He waived saying anything about the Oath." The reference to Spain recalls the great victory gained in August 1718, by Sir George Byng, over the Spanish fleet in the Mediterranean, and the complete destruction, early in the following year, by a storm, of Spain's second Armada off Cape Finisterre. As this expedition was meant to support the Jacobite claim to the Crown—the Pretender being in Madrid at the time—its annihilation was regarded as a special interposition of the hand of God.

A very awkward case came before the Assembly of 1719 from Dumfries, in which Grierson had officially to act as peacemaker between the contending parties. The matter was all the more sad because the complainer was William Veitch, who had earned such a good record for himself during the days of the persecution. It seems that Veitch had quarrelled with his colleagues in Dumfries. In its origin, the disagreement was concerned with the right of Mr Veitch to a special spot of ground in the churchyard. That was settled, but the ill-feeling broke out again, when as Veitch alleged, his colleagues, Linn and Paton, refused to employ him to preach, because he bowed in the pulpit after preaching to the English governor and officers, whereas they confined that mark of respect to the magistrates. Very wisely the Assembly did not want to take up this grievance. Doubtless, through old age, Veitch was a little bit irritable, but he was persuaded to drop the appeal on the understanding that the Moderator would write to his colleagues. Accordingly a letter was drawn up by four ministers with the advice of the Lord Justice Clerk and Lord Pencaitland. It contained some very laudatory references to the services and sufferings of the "Very Reverend Mr William Veitch," and after calling attention to the reservation made by Veitch on the demission of his charge to the effect that he could preach "when he desired," it went on to say that the General Assembly recommended them to allow him to preach when he gave "timeous advertisement." "We question not," it added, "but as an evidence of your brotherly regard to him, all proper care will be taken by you to have a decent place of interment provided for him and his spouse." This was sent to the ministers individually, and signed by "your affectionate brother and servant in the Lord, James Grierson, Moderator." The story is pathetic. It was hard on the old Covenanter to be treated in this way, and even if he were in the wrong, which

is far from being proved, the younger men might have humoured him. At any rate, the Assembly took the most prudent and dignified way to deal with the difficulty, and Grierson is entitled to a share of the praise.

Another matter of great importance occupied the attention of the Assembly. The Marrow Controversy was just beginning. No direct mention was made of it, but in the instructions given to the Commission, they were ordered to "inquire into the publishing and spreading of books and pamphlets tending to the diffusing of the condemned proposition of Auchterarder, and promoting a system of opinions relative thereto, which are inconsistent with our Confession of Faith; and that the recommenders of such books and pamphlets, or the errors therein contained, be called before them, to answer for their conduct in such recommendation" (Hetherington, *Hist.*, p. 630). How the Commission discharged its duty does not concern us just now. It is enough to say that its leading guide and counsellor was Principal Hadow, who seems to have had a personal pique at Hog of Carnock, dating from the time when they were students together in Holland. Hog, it will be remembered, first issued *The Marrow* in Scotland.

It is known to all conversant with the general ecclesiastical history of this period, that the Auchterarder proposal was an attempt made by the Presbytery of Auchterarder to secure the orthodoxy of probationers, so that they might preach the great evangelical doctrines and not a mere ethical system. With this end in view, the Presbytery drew up a list of searching questions which they demanded students should answer before receiving license. The matter became acute when one student of divinity, William Craig by name, was refused license on the ground that though the tests formally prescribed by the Assembly were satisfactorily passed by him, he failed to meet the wishes of the Presbytery in reference to their own supplementary articles. Craig appealed to the Assembly of 1717, and in defence of his claim, laid on the table of the Assembly the additional formula to which the Presbytery maintained he did not duly assent. It ran in this way:—"I believe that it is not sound or orthodox to teach that we must forsake sin in order to our coming to Christ, and instating us in Covenant with God." This, of course, in a certain real sense was *ultra vires*, though it is constitutionally open to Presbyteries to take all steps they think proper, so long

as they are conformable to the law of the Church, for assuring themselves of the orthodoxy of applicants for license. Craig won his case in the Assembly, which not only prohibited the Presbytery of Auchterarder from requiring subscription to any formula, except that which had been approved by the Church, but further expressed their " abhorrence of the foresaid proposition as unsound and most detestable as it stands and was offered to Mr Craig." Hetherington speaks of this sentence as " hasty," but it is open to question whether the Assembly in guarding the rights of the probationer, did not act unconstitutionally in condemning the Presbytery, who were not present to appear in defence of their conduct. This became apparent in the following year, when the Assembly on the report of their special Commission appointed to deal with the matter accepted the explanation of the Auchterarder brethren, though still regarding the terms of the proposition as " unwarrantable and exceptional." All this, however, just shows the growing spirit of hostility on the part of the larger section of the Church towards the Marrow Men, and fully explains the instructions given by the Assembly of 1719 to its Commission to call before them all who expressed sympathy with " the condemned proposition of Auchertarder."

As Chairman of the Commission during what has come to be known as the Moderator's year of office, Grierson received a letter from his friend Wodrow, regarding the possible action which the Commission might take in favour of those ministers who had not seen their way to accept the Oath of Abjuration. Grierson himself had taken the Oath on the 28th October 1712, with the explanation with which he and others, led by Carstares, accompanied their acceptance of it. Wodrow was still a pronounced non-juror. In view, therefore, of the meeting of Commission, he wrote to Grierson on the 24th February 1720. The minister of Eastwood found himself in an awkward predicament, being, as he said himself, in company with those " who decline the oaths upon principles we loathe and abhor." The reference is, on the one hand, to the strict Cameronian party, and on the other, to the Jacobites. Wodrow wished to be distinguished from them in the eyes of the Government. At the same time, he doubted whether it would be good for the Church as a whole, if the Commission presented an address to the Crown, setting forth the conscientious objections which some still entertained in

the matter. He closed his letter with the friendly words :—" I know none who understands the circumstances of affairs better than yourself, and nobody's judgment can be of greater weight with me than yours." In the end, a modification of the Oath in terms suggested by this Commission was adopted by Parliament, with the result that the great majority of those who had held out against the Oath were able to accept it. Wodrow, however, like Boston and the Erskines, stoutly refused to conform to it.

At the opening of the Assembly of 1720, Grierson preached the usual sermon. Wodrow says of it :—" Mr Grierson had an excellent sermon on Psalm lxviii. 28, 'Thy God hath commanded thy strength ; strengthen, O God, that which thou hast wrought for us.' He had a touch about firing the country, much to the same purpose with the last sermon I heard at Eastwood." We should have liked to have known exactly what Grierson meant by " firing the country" (*Corr.* ii. 525).

After his Moderatorial reign, Grierson with the modesty characteristic of him, withdrew from the public gaze and devoted himself to his ministerial duty. He took no part in literary work. His name, however, appears attached to " An Epistle of Recommendation," which was prefixed to Halyburton's treatise, entitled *Natural Religion Insufficient*, and which was published after the author's death. His fellow-signatories to it were William Carstares, James Hadow, William Hamilton, William Wisheart, Thomas Black, and John Fleming. It was no mean honour to be associated with such men.

Ill-health gradually overtook Grierson. In 1729 he was almost wholly incapacitated for work. The entry in the *Analecta* about him is pathetic. " The ministry of Edinburgh, the chief watch-tower, hath within these few months "—the date is December 1729—" had great breaches made in it, and there are six vacancies in the town." Three ministers died within six months and, adds the historian with great plainness, " there are three others very near dead," one being " Mr Grierson, who hath been almost laid aside by a failour and palsy for several years " (iv. 100). The end came in 1732. On the 5th July of that year he died in the seventy-first year of his age, and the thirty-fourth of his ministry. Of his wife, we only know that she was a daughter of Matthew Selkrig, minister of Crichton.

CHAPTER XVII

THOMAS BLACK, MODERATOR, 1721

Thomas Black of Perth has left behind him a record of faithful service, which gained for him the esteem of his brethren and the goodwill of the community among whom he lived and laboured for forty years. Having been educated at the University of Glasgow, where he completed his studies in theology, Black received license from the Presbytery of Glasgow on the 9th July 1695. Like all his contemporaries in the Church, his early days were spent amid the exciting scenes which culminated in the deposition of the Stewarts from the throne of Britain. Of the opening years of his life no tradition has reached us. Either by the influence of his friends or by his own outstanding merits, Black's probationary period came quickly to an end. Three weeks after license he was called to Strathmiglo, where he was ordained on the 12th September. He remained here, however, only for a short time. On the 14th October 1697, he was inducted to the parish of Wemyss; yet hardly had he settled down to work in his new sphere, when he was asked to go to the second charge in Perth. He accepted the invitation, and was admitted to the ministry in the Fair City on the 5th April 1698.

His stay in Wemyss had lasted only six months. It was not long enough for him to make any general abiding impression, but it is extremely interesting to know that Lady Elcho, whose sad death is told in the biography of James Grierson, " desired those about her to give her blessing to Mr Black, and she blessed God she had ever seen him " (Wodrow, *Select Biog.* ii. 516). This is high testimony to the spiritual influence wielded by Black.

We are at a loss, however, to understand why he so quickly withdrew from his work in Fife. A third call to a minister, presumably under thirty years of age, and within three years of his ordination, is unusual. Doubtless it testifies to Black's possession of rare preaching power. In Perth he remained till the close of his life, receiving a fresh mark of approbation

in 1705, when he was transferred to the first charge. In September 1707, he was appointed by Queen Anne to the Professorship of Divinity in St Mary's College, St Andrews, but the bond of affection between him and his people was so strong, that he could not be prevailed upon to leave them. According to the records of the Presbytery of St Andrews, the Commission of Assembly had something to do with his continuance in Perth, for not only did they express their disapproval of his acceptance of the Chair, but actually "prohibited" him from going to St Andrews, on the ground that "he was more likely to be useful where he was." His name was again mentioned for the same office in 1712, after the death of his friend Halyburton, but the matter was not carried further. His mind was made up to remain in the ministry.

Mr Black became intimately associated with the rise of the Secession Church, through William Wilson, who figures so largely with the Erskines in that movement, being his colleague. Perth had grown to such an extent as to warrant the Town Council to erect, in 1716, a third charge within their bounds. For this purpose the West Kirk, which had been long in disrepair, was fitted up and opened. Wilson was its first minister. It fell to the senior minister to ordain his youthful colleague. Wilson's references to the service are full of interest. "The day of my ordination," he says, "was set on the 1st November, and Mr Black was appointed to preach the sermon. O Lord, help thy servant and help me." After the service was ended, Wilson wrote in his *Diary* in this wise :—"Mr Black, my colleague, preached upon Gal. i. 15, 16, insisting chiefly on the first part of the 16th verse, 'It pleased God to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen.' The Lord gave His countenance and presence to His servant in the whole of the work. He was enlarged in preaching, and when he came to the solemn action, he was much enlarged in praying" (Ferrier's *Wilson*, p. 132). A ministry begun in such a spirit of devoutness could not fail to be crowned with success, while the appreciation Wilson expressed of the work of Mr Black, was a sure token of the harmony in which they would carry on their common ministry.

The testing time came in 1733, after Erskine had been censured by the Assembly for his sermon preached at the opening of the Synod of Perth and Stirling. Wilson declared

his adherence to the position and views of his friend, and protested against the finding of the Assembly. On this account the Commission cited him to appear before them on the 9th August. A week before, the Session of Perth petitioned the Commission to delay proceedings at this juncture, on account of the value of Mr Wilson's services to the city. One reason they urged in support of their plea was, that Mr Black "is of advanced age, so that we cannot reasonably expect he shall be long continued with us, his health and strength daily decaying." As Moderator of Session, Black signed this document, and thereby gave proof of his esteem of Wilson. At the same time, the Magistrates and Town Council of Perth forwarded a petition to the Commission, in which they craved that Wilson should not be suspended. This is what they say, and it bears testimony to Black's popularity :—"We beg leave to represent to the reverend Commission, that the two Churches of this Burgh are every Lord's Day filled with numerous assemblies of our inhabitants ; the two weekday sermons in one of the Churches are likewise attended by a pretty numerous audience ; that besides the said Mr Wilson, we have only one other minister, the Rev. Mr Thomas Black, who by long-continued and indefatigable ministerial labours among us, and his advanced age, is now much decayed as to his bodily strength, so as he could not possibly subsist alone under such a weighty charge ; and it would be a great hardship by over-burdening him in his old age, to deprive this place of the benefit of his ministry during the small remaining part of his life among us" (*ibid.* p. 239).

No one would regret more than Black the decision of the November Commission of the same year, by which the Seceders were declared to be no longer ministers of the Church of Scotland, inasmuch as it deprived him of the services and help of one for whom he had so warm a regard as Wilson. Black, however, did not live to drink the further cup of bitterness which was mixed by the Assembly of 1740, when it deposed Wilson and his associates from the holy ministry. As Wilson continued in Perth to minister to the supporters of the new movement, his friendship with Black, even in the painfully altered circumstances, would remain unbroken to their mutual joy. Feeling, too, ran high in favour of the suspended minister. The *Caledonian Mercury* of the 19th April 1734, informs us that "when Mr Adam Fergusson, minister of Killin, came to Perth to intimate the

sentence of the Commission, Mr Fergusson was met in the suburbs by several of the inhabitants, who fell upon the gentleman, though vested with supreme authority and attended by several armed men; yet they were all severely cudgelled and obliged to retire *re infecta*."

There was one matter in which Black did not see eye to eye with his valued colleague. This was in connection with the Oath of Abjuration. An address had been drawn up in 1715 to the king regarding a modification of the Oath which in its original terms was unacceptable to a great many ministers. In this address, which was signed by more than a hundred non-juring ministers, His Majesty was asked to "find out some expedient" to remove the difficulty which they felt. Black and his other colleague, Fleming, signed it. Wilson was unable to do so. Wodrow in a letter to Wilson thus reveals the situation. "Upon the whole, Dear Brother, though I fancy this may not reach you till you be determined one way or other, it's my advice that as you are not to suffer yourself to be carried against your light by regard to any whomsoever; so upon the other hand, use your utmost endeavours to get light if possible to come up to the signing of it, since your colleagues have done it. I truly pity persons in a collegiate post. By all means possible, endeavour by reasoning, meditation and prayer, to be of a piece with them in everything lawful" (*Corr.* ii. 231). Wilson, however, maintained his attitude of antagonism to the Oath and declined to sign the address. But this conscientious difference of opinion did not interfere with Black's friendship with him.

Long before the eventful controversy, which culminated in the Secession Church, loomed on the horizon, Black's faithful ministry had brought him to the Chair of the Assembly. His election took place in 1721. It was expected that William Mitchell would be chosen, but, as Wodrow tells us:—"Mr Thomas Black of Perth carried it by six votes, which some think odd. Mr Mitchell came very near. Messrs Hart, Cameron and Semple had no votes almost" (*Corr.* ii. 579). The new Moderator's pronounced evangelical sympathies were of great moment to the Marrow Men in the Assembly, who to the number of twelve "represented" by a petition laid upon the table, the wisdom of repealing the Act of 1720, which denounced the doctrines for which they contended. An unlooked for event caused the Assembly to relegate the petition of the "Representers" to the Commission.

The Lord High Commissioner, the Earl of Rothes, was seized with serious illness. It was deemed advisable that the Assembly should come to a close, and the work be undertaken by the usual Commission. A day or two passed by, after which the Lord High Commissioner, against the wishes of the Assembly and the orders of his physician, ventured out for the purpose of winding up the proceedings. "Then the Moderator," we are told, "had a short speech signifying the Commissioner's illness, and adjourning the Assembly in the ordinary form, and then turned to the Commissioner and expressed the Assembly's sense of his heavy distress and sympathy with him. The Commissioner spoke a very few words, but was not able, signifying that he never used to straiten the Assembly for time, but now was not able to attend, thanking them for their dispatch, and hoped they would be at no loss by referring matters to so numerous a Commission, and adjourned them as the Moderator had done before. I find some dislike our rising thus, without asserting our power to sit without a Commissioner, but others see no ground for such an assertion, when Providence cleared our way, by laying affliction on him." So Wodrow records the incident, by which Black's Moderatorship came to an unexpected close (*ibid.* 583). In the Commission which was immediately held, Black acted naturally as Chairman, but the case against the Marrow Men was only advanced a little way. It was left for further consideration to the Assembly of 1722, when it fell to the minister of Perth to preach the opening sermon. His text was Matt. xvi. 18, "On this rock I will build my Church." In connection with it, Wodrow makes the remark :—"We had an excellent sermon and very little of politics." In 1727 Black was again nominated for the Chair of the Assembly, but lost it by twenty-one votes.

Meantime Mr Black continued his labours among his own people. One publication came from his pen entitled *A Meditation, or Soliloquy of the Soul.* The testimony of the Kirk Session and Town Council of Perth, already noticed, to the character of his pulpit work, is a sufficient proof of the high level maintained by him in his sermons. Black likewise saw through the press an edition of Halyburton's sermons delivered on sacramental occasions. To these he wrote a brief preface, in which he refers to the intimacy between himself and the author. "I do, with a particular pleasure, own that being of his acquaintance about the space

of fourteen years, and having frequently had occasion of converse with him, I wanted not opportunity to observe that in him which exceedingly endeared him to me, and made me reckon it a great happiness to have had such intimacy with him." When we go back for fourteen years from Halyburton's death, we come practically to the days when Black was settled in Wemyss. We know from Halyburton's *Memoirs* that he was tutor about that time in the family of the Earl of Wemyss. During Black's short stay in the parish, he doubtless met frequently with him, though Halyburton does not mention Black's name. As Halyburton had relatives in Perth whom he visited from time to time, Black had many opportunities of cultivating acquaintance with him. The friendship which existed between the two men is a guarantee of the high character and evangelical sympathies of the minister of Perth. Only men like minded with himself cared for the companionship of the spiritually minded Professor in St Andrews. It may also be noticed in the same connection, that Black is mentioned by Wodrow as one of those " who had appeared most against Mr Simson " (*Corr.* ii. 260.)

A glimpse is given to us of Black's style of teaching in the remarks he makes on the Lord's Supper in his foreword to Halyburton's Sermons. " The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper," he says, " is our great gospel feast, at which the people of God are entertained with ' fat things full of marrow and wines on the lees well refined.' In this blessed ordinance, Christ the wisdom and power of God, is evidently set forth, crucified before our eyes. Here is it that the Lord is graciously pleased sometimes to give special manifestations of Himself to the souls of His people, which they are called to improve for their confirmation and establishment. In attending on this solemnity in a due manner, the Lord vouchsafes to His own the sweet influences of His Spirit and grace, wherein their souls are refreshed and revived after sad decays ; and serious souls ordinarily have never more ardent desires after, and fervent longings for the ' breaking of that glorious day, when all shadows shall for ever flee away,' than when they come from this precious ordinance, which is one of the nearest resemblances of heaven that we enjoy here upon earth."

Black's labours came to an end after a period of broken health on the 25th October 1739, when he had completed the forty-fifth year of his ministry. Little is known of his

private life. In 1709 Calamy, during his tour in Scotland, came to Perth. He thus records his visit. "After some time Mr Austin came to us, attended by Mr Black, the minister, and the magistrates of the town" (ii. 208.) Nothing seems to have come down to us about Mrs Black. A son, David, who entered the Church, was for two years associated with his father as minister of the second charge, to which he was ordained in 1737. Thomas Black's eldest daughter, Katharine, was married to the well-known John Glas of Tealing, who after being removed from his charge for unsound doctrine, came to Perth in 1733, and conducted services regularly for those who sympathized with his peculiar views. The father-in-law's position in this way was made somewhat trying, but the kindliness of his disposition and the wideness of his outlook enabled him to maintain the principles of his own Church, and to keep on the friendliest terms with his dissenting relative. The difficulties which Black encountered through the action of Glas in taking up his abode in Perth, are vividly brought before us by the exclamation of a zealous lady, who, observing Mr Glas in the street, cried out—"Why do they not rive him in pieces?" One answer to that question undoubtedly was because no man would give such pain to the gentle spirit of Thomas Black, the much loved minister of Perth. Glas, too, was not left in any doubt as to his father-in-law's opinion of the doctrines he advocated, for Black told him plainly that "all his fighting was in vain, for what he aimed at would never take place."

One of Black's grandsons, the Rev. David Black, minister first at St Madoes and afterwards in Lady Yester's in Edinburgh, has been called "the M'Cheyne of those days." A sympathetic account of the character and life of this saintly man, with interesting glimpses of Charles Simeon and James Haldane, is given in the Rev. Adam Philip's *Evangel in Gowrie.*

CHAPTER XVIII

JAMES SMITH, MODERATOR, 1723 AND 1731

We do not meet with the name of James Smith, who filled on two occasions the Moderator's Chair, until at the close of his college career, we find him installed as tutor in the family of Dalrymple of Cousland. After he fulfilled this appointment, he undertook similar service in the family of Dundas of Arniston. With his pupil, Robert Dundas, afterwards Lord President of the Court of Session, he kept up a life-long acquaintance, which was beneficial both to the minister and the advocate. In 1724, when Dundas held the influential post of Lord Advocate, he took occasion in the General Assembly to refer in warm terms to his old preceptor, for whom, he said, he had "peculiar honour, since he owed a great deal of his education to him." Association with the house of Arniston did not fail in later years to prove of immense advantage to the young minister, but for his first preferment in the Church he was indebted to the Dalrymples of Hailes, through whose influence he was called to the parish of Morham. His ordination took place on the 24th September 1706, three years after he had been licensed by the Presbytery of Dalkeith. In accordance with the custom that prevailed at that time, intimation of his approaching settlement was sent by the Presbytery of Haddington, within whose bounds Morham lay, to the neighbouring Presbytery of Dunbar. At the meeting of that Presbytery on the 18th September 1706, as their minutes record, "a letter was produced from the Moderator of the Presbytery of Haddington concerning the intended ordination of Mr James Smith in the parish of Morham, which being read, Mr Thomas Findlay was appointed to signify to that Presbytery that the brethren had nothing to object against his ordination" (Louden's *Morham*, p. 59).

For five years Smith remained in his East Lothian charge, after which he accepted an invitation to become minister of Cramond, where his settlement brought to a close a long

period of disturbance among the parishioners, who could not agree over the filling up of the vacancy created in 1709 by the transference of William Hamilton to the Chair of Divinity in Edinburgh. The Presbytery did its best to produce harmony, but the differences in the congregation remained as pronounced as ever. Smith's name was brought forward at an early period along with those of three probationers. The General Assembly, in dealing with the appeal which came before them, ordered the Presbytery to begin *de novo.* On the 6th March 1711, a call was presented to a licentiate, Robert Mutter, who, however, did not acquit himself in his trials for ordination to the satisfaction of the Presbytery. They prescribed fresh exercises for him. Mutter refused to accept them, or at any rate put off time. On the 1st January 1712, he appeared before the Presbytery, and handed in a letter returning the call, in order to " prevent all debates and heats " in the parish. Finally the heritors and elders elected Smith on the 10th January. The dates I have given are taken from Principal Lee's evidence before the Committee on Church Patronage in 1834. They differ slightly from those given by Scott in the *Fasti.*

Very early in his ministry, Smith seems to have been marked out by his brethren as a man of the highest qualifications, who was destined to wield a great influence in the councils of the Church. It is therefore to be regretted that the story of his work in Morham and Cramond should be so lacking in details. In January 1723, the majority of the ministers and elders in Edinburgh sought to bring him to one of the city charges—New Greyfriars—but the Town Council, who were the patrons, overruled their choice and gave the vacant charge to Hepburn of Torryburn. This, as Wodrow tells us, " made a great deal of noise." In May of the same year, Smith was raised to the Moderator's Chair by a majority of twenty-seven votes over his opponent. As he was only in the seventeenth year of his ministry at the time, there must have been something peculiarly weighty about the minister of Cramond to induce fathers and brethren to summon one so young to preside over their deliberations. The strenuous historian of Eastwood tells us how Smith fulfilled his task. " Mr Smith of Cramond was chosen Moderator. The town of Edinburgh and several others struggled hard against this choice, and Mr Blackwell was set up in opposition to him ; but in vain, and the Chair could scarce be better filled "

(*Corr.* iii. 53). The only matter before the Assembly which called for special dealing, was the case of Gabriel Wilson of Maxton, who was acquitted of the absurd charges brought against him by his Presbytery in connection with his famous sermon entitled *The Trust.* In the following year, says Wodrow, "Mr Smith opened the Assembly with a good sermon, which was not well heard."

In the Assembly of 1724, Smith took a very prominent part. He had been appointed Convener of a Commission to settle a serious dispute at Lochmaben. The action of the Commission was criticized, a party in the Assembly holding that they had gone beyond their remit. Very strong feeling was displayed. "I never saw such confusion as this day," says Wodrow, who attributes the confusion to the incapacity of the temporary Moderator, Mr M. Reid (*Corr.* iii. 132). In reply to this charge, "Smith made an answer *vivâ voce* in about an hour and a quarter, which was owned by all, even by the other side, to be one of the best discourses and best said of any that has been before an Assembly." The resentment of the majority, however, showed itself in excluding Smith from the Commission of Assembly for the ensuing year. In order to understand this procedure it must be borne in mind that the Commission at that time was filled up by election from ministers and elders over the whole Church, each Presbytery being represented in proportion to the number of charges it contained. It was not, as now, made up of members of Assembly without distinction. To be upon the Commission, therefore, was an honour. The opponents of Smith threw him out.

Towards Boston and his friends in the great Marrow controversy, Smith took up an attitude of hostility. It is remarked in *Gospel Truth* that he was "violent against them." John Howie, in his Preface to Shields' *Faithful Contendings*, says :—"When a member of the General Assembly of 1723 was speaking in favour of our covenanted work of Reformation to strengthen his cause and make his demand more just and equitable, Mr James Smith in Cramond from the Moderator's Chair, in the face of the General Assembly, declared 'that the Church was not now upon that footing,' meaning the covenants."

In the second Simson case, Smith took a very active part. Admittedly the case was very difficult to deal with. It was even more complicated by the admission of error on the part

of Simson himself. While his avowal of certain orthodox doctrines seemed sufficient to some minds, it did not satisfy his thorough-going opponents. The question came practically to be—Should a heretic Professor who recants, be allowed to continue in his Chair? On the matter under discussion Smith held a very clear opinion. Wodrow says, in a letter dated the 13th May 1728:—"Mr Smith spoke last, that he was unsatisfied with Mr Simson's declarations on the matter; that he had certainly injected scruples most needlessly into the students, and misled them in this great matter; and he concluded the article both relevant and proven." Three days later he writes:—"Mr Smith spoke at some length; though some thought, and perhaps it was not far wrong to reckon that he himself was among the number of those that did think so, that Mr Simson though now he had declared himself sound, deserved deposition for what was in the process; yet taking all things together, as things now stand, he thought in prudence, and for peace and harmony, it were better without a vote to agree to a suspension, till another Assembly should see reason to take it off." When the case was finally disposed of in 1729, Smith was not a member of Assembly, but there can be no doubt as to his agreement with the decision arrived at. When he was Moderator for the second time in 1731, we are told that his election by a majority was sufficient to keep the friends of Professor Simson from making any attempt in the direction of reducing his sentence as they had intended.

During this period Smith enjoyed the confidence of the Church to such a degree, that he was sent as a deputy to the Court in London. Good work was done by him during his stay in the south. A larger grant was desired from the king for the Highlands. Wodrow, in a letter to his wife, dated the 26th May 1724, writes:—"I am well-informed from the first hand, that the matter of the King's grant of £500 more to this Church is in a good way of forwardness. Mr Walpole has consented, and the King has remitted it to the Treasury. Mr Smith's influence with the advocate [Dundas], and his diligence when last up at Court is the spring of all this." On one occasion (the exact date is 1728), Smith was able to repay part of the debt he owed to Dundas. The Advocate had been called upon to defend Carnegie of Finhaven on the charge of murder. The peculiarity of the case was this. Carnegie intended to kill the Earl of Strathmore, but by misadventure

slew Mr Lyon of Bridgeton in Forfar. Dundas contended that in Scripture no case covering such a deed was to be found. He expatiated on this at considerable length, insisting that the Bible took no cognisance of the act of killing one man, when the intention was to kill another. He succeeded in gaining a verdict in favour of his client. Common report stated that Smith had coached him in getting up the argument from Scripture.

In 1730, after being for twenty-four years in his quiet country parishes, Smith was summoned to take the oversight of the New North Church in Edinburgh. His induction took place on the 23rd July. Two other ministers were received into city charges on the same occasion. Wodrow reports :—"Mr Smith is transported to Edinburgh, and Mr [George] Wisheart [to the Tron], and Mr Goldie [to Lady Yester's], all being admitted by one sermon" (*Ana.* iv. 166). The method of placing three ministers at one service in different churches in Edinburgh is peculiar. Probably the act of induction was rendered more impressive by such a procedure ; yet it hardly accords with the fitness of things that a minister should be set apart for congregational work, when it is impossible, owing to the limited accommodation available, for all the parishioners to be present. Smith was now in the prime of life and in the plenitude of his powers. He was at the very centre of the affairs of the Church, and might be expected to take a more prominent part than ever in the management of its business. But into his fresh work he was forced to enter under the shadow of a great loss. A fortnight after his induction to Edinburgh, his wife, Catherine Oswald, died in her forty-sixth year, and the minister of New North was left alone to carry on his arduous work.

In the following year, the great honour came to Smith of being called a second time to the Chair of the Assembly. In 1728, his name had been proposed by Principal Chalmers for the same high position, but on that occasion William Wisheart was elected by a majority of eighteen votes. All this shows that Smith had by this time fully established himself as a leader in the Church. A curious proof of his ability in conducting ecclesiastical business is given in Riccaltoun's *Reply* to Bannatine's *Essay on Gospel and Legal Preaching*. "I do not think," he says, "our Essayer is so very aspiring, yet he has given such a swatch of his talent of writing, that perhaps in a little time the watch-word may be given at all the avenues

of the city, to advance him into the P—r D—r's Honourable Post" (p. 102). A MS. note on the margin of the page in the copy from which I quote, and evidently written by an interested reader who knew the situation states :—"The author means Mr Smith, late Moderator of the Assembly, who was a principal hand in drawing all the papers that are published by this Church." It is not, therefore, to be wondered at that the Assembly of 1731 should show their appreciation of all the work Smith had done, by asking him to preside over them. Wodrow, however, lets us see a little behind the scenes. Smith had not been returned by the Presbytery of Edinburgh at first as a member of Assembly. "He had been left out, as is said, by his own desire and Professor Hamilton's party; but when the Commissioner came down, eight or ten days before the Assembly, he was chosen in the room of a brother, who made his excuse, in order to be chosen Moderator. I doubt if he would have been chosen without the Commissioner's weight. The vote for Moderator ran between Mr Smith and Mr William Millar, and Mr Smith carried it by a small majority. Mr Smith is failing, and not so vigorous as formerly, and his passion sometimes discovers itself. However, Professor Hamilton and he seem now to be joined, and it's believed he will go to the Chair, and Mr Hamilton will be Principal." This is Wodrow's account in his *Correspondence*. The *Analecta* gives us the same story in a more definite form. Smith, it tells us, was not elected a member of Assembly, but when Lord Loudoun as High Commissioner came, he would have him as Moderator, so Mr Thorburn, one of the ministers of Edinburgh, made his excuse that he was going to the goat-milk, and the Presbytery chose Mr Smith (iv. 226). In the same connection Wodrow adds :—"I observe that Mr Smith has not that vivacity and readiness that once he had. He is a little deaf, and his warmth and heat, sometimes on provocation even discovering itself in passion, appears which is no small token of his failure in natural parts" (p. 237).

An incident of a regrettable character in which the dignity of the Chair was involved, took place during the proceedings of this Assembly. We let our indefatigable historian narrate it for us. "On the 15th May, there was a very shameful squabble between the Moderator and Mr Gordon of Ardoch in the Committee on Overtures. Ardoch alleged that the Moderator had given a wrong state of a thing. Some others

had complained, particularly Affleck, of peculiar treatment from Mr Smith, which was reckoned ane attacking the chair and the Judicatory, but that was soon over. But Ardoch and he came to an undecent height. Ardoch is a man of great passion and still [*i.e.* constantly] interposing, but when he contradicted the Moderator and said he had misstated it, the Moderator being pushed to it by Professor Hamilton and Mr Crawford [Professor of Ecclesiastical History in Edinburgh,] would leave the Chair and come to the bar. Nobody in the Committee was for it save these two. He would be to the bar, and Mr Gordon was unwilling; the members of the Committee opposed. They were so loud I heard them at the distance of the street and the Kirk! When I came in they were not done. I heard the Moderator call Mr Gordon a madman. The Solicitor interposed, and Mr Gordon made some kind of acknowledgment, and Mr Smith closed with prayer, when he lamented weakness and passion very much" (*ibid.* 259). The incident fully justifies the statement of Wodrow that Smith was possessed at this time of considerable heat. It did not, of course, take place in the Assembly, but in the Committee on Overtures, which seems to have been very fully attended, and which may have been a Committee of the whole house. The redeeming feature of the story is to be found in the touching fact that as he concluded the business with prayer, Smith mourned his "weakness and passion." Much can be forgiven to a man who has the heart and the courage to do that.

This Assembly of 1731 marks the formal beginning of that policy which afterwards produced such dire consequences within the Church, and which was deemed by its opponents to be traceable to the re-introduction of patronage. The practice of imposing the nominee of the patron of a parish upon an unwilling congregation, had been followed already in one or two cases. The disinclination of a Presbytery to settle a minister on such terms, was got over in a high-handed manner. A pliant Committee of Assembly was appointed to carry through the ordination. To those Committees, which afterwards became very frequent, was popularly given the name of "Riding Committees." The first occasion on which a Committee of this kind overrode the wishes and the rights of a congregation has already been told in the biography of William Mitchell. The Assembly of 1731 showed its departure from the spirit of the Church in the years which

immediately followed the Revolution, by refusing to permit a protest against violent settlements to be read. It also sent an overture down to Presbyteries under the Barrier Act, concerning the "method of planting vacant churches." This overture which bore some resemblance to the Act of 1690, needs only to be set down in order to show how the privileges of the members of the Church were being further curtailed. In the act of 1690, the heritors and elders were "to name and propose the person to the whole congregation, to be either approven or disapproven of them." By the new overture it was proposed that the heritors and elders should have the power to "elect and call one to be the minister" of the parish. Smith seems to have sympathized strongly with the movement which sought to diminish the privileges of the Christian people. The following story told of him reveals his position. "This brings to my mind," says Wodrow, "a story I hear of what lately passed betwixt Mr Cunningham of Boquhan and Mr Smith of Cramond, now of Edinburgh. Mr Cunningham, with much seriousness, asked Mr Smith what he and some others proposed to themselves in violenting people and Presbyteries in the settlements, and told him he thought they acted very imprudently and would soon lose the affection of the people and many gentlemen, asking what under God they had further to look to. It seems this raised Mr Smith's passion a little, and he answered him, 'We have done it [in the case of Balfron], or will have done it, and it must be done.' 'Must be done,' says Boquhan, 'that is an impertinent answer from any Presbyterian minister and unworthy of you,' and he run him down fearfully till he had nothing to say" (*Ana.* iv. 210).

With the development of this policy in the courts of the Church, it is not needful for us to concern ourselves. It is enough to show that Smith was willing to go back to the old order of things, by which the presentees of patrons were forced into pulpits, even though the strongest opposition was made to them by the people. Apart altogether from the rightness or wrongness of such a system of church government, it may be freely admitted that Smith and those who agreed with him, failed to interpret the signs of the times. The pronounced antagonism in a growing number of parishes to such settlements, ought to have warned them that they would never succeed in stifling a most legitimate aspiration. Their folly became apparent in that Secession, which quickly

asserted itself in Scotland and carried outside the limits of the Established Church a large and valuable section of the spiritual life of the nation. Smith cannot be acquitted of blindness in the matter, and must bear his share of the blame.

During this time, when the affairs of their own Church demanded full attention, many of the influential ministers and elders in Scotland interested themselves in the doings and needs of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. Ministers in the sister island sought the advice of their Scottish friends, as they faced the difficulties which arose on the arena of their own Church. Smith along with Hamilton, Stirling, Wodrow and others kept up a constant correspondence with ministers across the Irish Channel. One question which was much debated and caused a great deal of feeling, concerned the necessity and wisdom of creed subscription. A certain number of Presbyterians in Ireland seem to have desired the abolition of the enactment, which decreed that all ministers and licentiates should avow their adherence to the Westminster Confession. At the bottom of the opposition to creed subscription, there was on the part of some, objection to the doctrines of the Confession itself. Smith did not have any sympathy with the efforts of the non-subscription brethren in Ireland. Writing in March 1724, Wodrow informed the Rev. William MacKnight, one of the Irish ministers :—" When I was in Edinburgh at the last Commission last week, I spoke to brethren there about the state of matters in Ireland, and our brethren's pressures there ; and to influence them the more, I took in with me Mr Halliday's *Reasons* [against creed subscription], which I had a loan of, and Professor Hamilton glanced it, and Mr Smith. You will be pleased to hear that they have a deep concern for our brethren there, and desired me to signify to Mr Livingston that they much wonder that he has not written to them. Mr Smith, in particular, desired me to acquaint Mr Livingston that he has not heard from him since June or July ; that since he has had any letter from Ireland he has written to Mr Livingston twice ; that he has sent near a sheet of paper in answer to the three queries which were sent over, and wrote a large letter since, in September or October, and gave them both to Mr Montier, according to direction. He professes the greatest earnestness to continue the correspondence." On the 2nd June of the same year, Wodrow wrote in a similar strain to the Rev. William Livingston of Temple

Patrick, repeating the assurance that Smith and his friends had the case of the Irish Church " very much at heart," and were wishful to know how the question regarding subscription progressed. As is well known, the controversy in Ireland ended in open rupture, but the communications to the subscribing brethren sent by Smith, Hamilton and others, show that the turn affairs had taken across the Channel was viewed with interest in Scotland, where in spite of tendencies towards Socinianism revealing themselves here and there, the Confessional doctrine of the Deity of Christ was accepted and subscribed to willingly. It was evidently the wish of some of the Irish ministers that the Scottish Assembly should mix itself up directly in the matter, but " Professor Hamilton, Mr Mitchell and other brethren of greatest weight and experience were at a loss to know in what manner " this could be done, or " to whom (were it found proper) they could write, or upon what head " (Wodrow, *Corr.* ii. 634).

The confidence which was reposed in Smith, and the eminent position he had attained were further shown by his appointment to the Chair of Divinity in Edinburgh on the 27th April 1732. He had only occupied the pulpit of the New North Church a little more than eighteen months. His services had been much appreciated by his congregation, for several of the elders and deacons appeared before the Presbytery " craving that he might be continued, there being no inconsistency in discharging both offices." The question of the union of the professorial and ministerial functions, however, had been already settled, and it was not re-opened in the present case. Smith did not long occupy the Chair. His friend, Principal Hamilton died in 1732, and in due course Smith was elected head of the University. In the chair he was succeeded by John Gowdie, who had been presented to the New North Church when Smith vacated it. On the resignation of the New North Church by Gowdie, Smith, doubtless in accordance with the wish of his old people, came back to minister to them, his election to the Principalship being no bar to his occupancy of a city charge. He entered upon the duties of the pastorate again on the 25th July 1733. In 1735 he was called upon to deal in the University with " the case of the so-called heresy of Mr Nimmo, a divinity student, from whose thesis excerpts were recorded in the minutes. Ninety-five divinity students expressed their abhorrence of his sentiments, and though he

was willing to recant them, the sentence of expulsion was passed upon him (Grant's *University* ii. 480). It would fall to Smith to pronounce judgment upon the erring student.

The Principal covered with honour, and busy with work, was not destined to continue long to serve the Church and University. His health began to fail. In 1736, he proceeded to Bristol to take "the hot wells." On his way home he died at Coldstream on the 14th August, in the fifty-sixth year of his age and the thirtieth of his ministry.

It only remains to refer to certain publications which came from Smith's pen. Two of them were anonymous and appeared while he was minister at Cramond, during the controversy which raged round the Oath of Abjuration. Both pamphlets deal with the same vexed subject. His own position was quite clear. He saw no harm in subscribing the Oath, and in due time he took it along with Carstares, Mitchell and many other members of the Presbytery of Edinburgh. Evidently, however, he had some trouble over the matter in his parish. With a view to allay feeling among his own people and throughout the Church if possible, he wrote the two treatises mentioned on the subject. They were published in quick succession, the first in 1712, and the second in 1713. He threw his remarks into conversational form, the first brochure bearing the title—*A Dialogue betwixt a Minister of the Church of Scotland and two of the Elders of his Congregation about the Oath of Abjuration.* This pamphlet is divided into two parts. In his opening sentences he tells how two elders visited him one morning to talk about the Oath. One of them he calls "Zealous," the other "Moderate." The conversation goes on for 112 pages. At the end of the forenoon discussion, "a servant came to acquaint them that dinner was served, whereupon the minister with his two guests and family went to dinner." Apparently the device of attending to the physical needs of disputants as a means of settling their differences, is not altogether modern. We have heard of it in recent years in connection with industrial disputes, and therefore note with interest that two hundred years ago it was tried in a Midlothian parish. At the close of the afternoon debate, "they parted in great love and affection, the two elders being well satisfied with what they had heard, and their minister very much refreshed with the success of his conversation."

In April of the following year, the elders again repaired to

the manse for the purpose of discussing two pamphlets which supported the opposite view. One was entitled—*An Essay upon the Design, the Reference, the Penalty and the Offence of the Oath*, and the other—*A Vindication of such as have refused it.* The upshot was that Smith convinced his visitors that it was their duty to trouble themselves no more about the Oath, and to be " charitable to all in the matter." " For my own part," he adds, " I can sincerely say that the more I hear or read of this Oath, the more I am convinced of its consistency with Presbyterian Principles, and the expediency of taking it by such of our Church as were clear about it." All this is duly set forth in *A Second Dialogue* between the minister and his elders, nearly as long as the first.

The question of the Oath of Abjuration is of no importance to-day, but it is interesting to observe that Wodrow, who took a different view of it from Smith, wrote a paper on it himself, which in some mysterious way, in opposition to the author's intention, got into print. Soon afterwards, Wodrow came across Smith's first *Dialogue*, though from its bearing no name, he was not aware who was responsible for it. Accordingly he proceeded to criticize it adversely in a letter to a friend under date 2nd October 1712. Smith had seen the copy of Wodrow's views on the Oath, which had been published without the author's consent, under the title of *Considerations*, and had referred adversely to them in his first pamphlet. The minister of Eastwood strongly repudiated the statements made by Smith, and in a letter to a friend charged his critic with " an even-down misrepresentation, not to say a known perversion of the author of the *Considerations*. . . . It is strange to think," he added, " what a length a party and the affectation of being an author, leads some good men to." It is not needful to pursue the matter further. The whole letter will be found in Wodrow's *Correspondence* (i. 263). When the authorship of the two *Dialogues* was made known, cannot be determined, but they are entered under Smith's name in the catalogue of the Advocates' Library.

Two sermons likewise came from Smith's pen. One was preached on the occasion of the death of Rev. James Craig of St Giles, in whom he showed an additional interest by editing his sermons in two volumes in 1732. Craig appears to have been a relation of Smith's by marriage. The other sermon was preached in the High Church of Edinburgh, in connection with the Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge,

on Monday, the 1st January 1733. It was printed by request. The sermon bears the title *The Misery of Ignorant and Unconverted Sinners*, and is founded on Eph. ii. 12. Its spirit may be judged from the following extracts :—" While this change (*i.e.* conversion according to John iii. 3) is wanting, men though baptized and bearing the Christian name, are in no better state than such as are without the Church." " Let us who are happily brought out of darkness into light by converting grace, be thankful to our gracious God and blessed Redeemer, who has made us who were born lame to walk, and raised to life us who were dead in trespasses and sins. By grace ye are saved." In connection with the Society in whose interests he preached, Smith took occasion to pronounce a eulogy on John Eliot, the Indian apostle, who, he said, " grudged not to bear the greatest fatigue and to suffer the greatest hardships in going through the country preaching the gospel to these poor heathens ; and it pleased God to bless his labours that he lived to see four and twenty congregations of Indians professing the name of Christ, and twenty-four Indians preaching the gospel among them." In closing, he thus pressed the claims of home and foreign missions :—" Let us honour the Lord with our substance in this, and liberally contribute to the charges necessary for instructing the ignorant, both at home and abroad. If we cannot do it from a plentiful and overflowing estate, let us save it from the unlawful pleasures of sensual love, and from the charges of a gaudy and splendid dress, and from the vain diversions of balls and comedies, which have come but lately to be known in this country." These quotations are fair samples of the whole sermon, and leave us in no doubt that Smith, though he approved of " Riding Committees," was loyal to the great doctrines of the gospel and to the claims which the Kingdom of Christ had upon the interest and liberality of his people.

The death of Smith called forth *A Sacred Poem to his Memory* of considerable length, in which mention is made of his flock " longing to hail their pastor's safe return." The following lines testify to the power he wielded in the Assembly—

" The drooping Church laments her faithful friend,
So formed to rule and ready to defend.
Contending parties all his merits own,
Unanimous in nought but this alone.
Oft when solemn, the grave Assemblies met,
And warm dissension fired the close debate ;

While tumults rage and bristling jars confound,
Supplying want of sense with force of sound,
Smith rose superior—falls the noisy roar,
And each tumultuous voice is heard no more.
Clear was his reasoning and strong his sense,
Urged home with all the warmth of eloquence;
Distinct the method and the diction pure;
The counsel quick and ready, but mature.
Who now with equal warmth and equal skill
Shall heal dissension and fierce discord still?
Oh, might these shameful discords ever cease,
And jarring tumults soften into peace;
Smith, easier blotted from each anxious breast,
Would go less mourn'd to everlasting rest."

These lines fully corroborate the verdict of Wodrow, who tells us that Smith was famed "for easiness of speaking, for distinctness of thought, and appearances in judicatories."

There appeared likewise in the *Caledonian Mercury* of the 30th August 1736 some memorial verses in Latin, in which the University of Edinburgh is represented as lamenting the death of Smith. As the opening lines briefly characterize the fourteen Principals who had ruled over the University, they are of sufficient interest to warrant insertion here.

"Hei mihi! perpetuae lachrymae sine fine dolores
Ingeminant; semper fletibus ora madent.
Rollocum, Bodium, Charterum, nomina clara,
Adamidem, atque alios lumina adempta fleo.
Nec non divinum Lichtonum ploro, piumque
Colvillum, secli sidera pulchra sui.
Hos quoque, Sandaeum ac Cantaeum, plango celebres,
Monroumque gravem, teque Rulæe gemo.
Nuper et amissi prudens Carstarius, atque
Mitis Hamiltonus, tuque Visarte pie.
Nunc quoque lugendus nobis Smithaeus acutus,
Consilio pollens, artibus, eloquio.
Cui fuit incoctum generoso pectus honesto,
Conscia mens recti, fraude doloque vacans.
Hoc duce florebant artes, legesque refixae
Stant iterum fixae; proh! cadit ante diem."

In the estimation of this admirer at least, the gifts and graces of Principal Smith were of no mean order.

CHAPTER XIX

JAMES ALSTON, MODERATOR, 1725 AND 1729

A tradition, which lingers in the parish in which he fulfilled his ministry, records that James Alston was known as "the proud priest of Dirleton." Whether this title was given to him by his parishioners or by outsiders, it is not possible to tell, but doubtless it describes with some degree of accuracy his spirit and demeanour. Wodrow, who knew him well, refers to him in his *Analecta*, in 1730, "as a man by himself, who will not come into any particular set" (iv. 138). This may indicate a certain reserve in Alston which made him keep a good deal to himself, and which at the same time was interpreted as pride. Evidently he did not wear his heart on his sleeve. Yet, whatever the special peculiarity in his nature may have been, it did not prevent him from gaining the respect of his brethren, who deemed him worthy on two occasions of occupying the Moderator's Chair.

Alston's father was in a good way of business in Edinburgh, where the future minister received his education, taking his Master's degree at the University, on the 28th July 1697. His boyhood was contemporaneous with the opening years of the Church's history after the re-establishment of Presbyterianism. With the details of the ecclesiastical life of the period, he would be well acquainted, and the city ministers—Meldrum, Crichton, Blair and others—would be familiar figures to him. In the congregation of one of them he must have been a member. License to preach the gospel was given to him by the Presbytery of Edinburgh, on the 15th July 1702. On the 12th May in the following year, he was appointed by the Town Council "to preach and pray in the Tron Kirk conform to Mr M'Calla's mortification." His immediate predecessor in this office was Ebenezer Veitch, who vacated it on his acceptance of the second charge in Ayr.

Alston's election to this post with its accompanying emoluments is a testimony to his character and ability. He did not, however, hold it long. On the 22nd September 1703, he

was ordained at Dirleton, and in this beautiful parish in the shire of Haddington, he remained to the end of his life.

Only a few allusions to his ministerial work seem to survive. It was the general practice of the Church at the time and for long before, to have a lecture and a sermon at each diet of public worship. The habit of lecturing through a definite portion of Holy Scripture commended itself to the people. It gave them a knowledge of God's Word, which otherwise they could not have obtained. The sermon was based on a special text. But as the eighteenth century grew older, a change seems to have gradually shown itself in some quarters in connection with preaching. Some ministers began to drop the lecture, putting in its stead an additional lesson from the Bible. Wodrow refers to the new custom of "reading two chapters in the forenoon, and [he thinks] two in the afternoon as well," without comment. This, he adds, is "Mr Alston's way at Dirleton" (*Ana.* iii. 203). The minister of Eastwood takes care to tell us that he preferred the Scriptural plan "of reading the law and giving the meaning thereof." Moreover, he regarded the new method as unnecessary in the case of people who could read.

For our knowledge of the quality of the pulpit work of Alston, we have again to fall back on Wodrow. We may well be grateful to the laborious efforts of that remarkable man, who while not free from the superstitious ideas of the age in which he lived, put down plainly what he saw and heard. Among the mass of material which he gathered together, it was hardly possible that every item should be found to be perfectly accurate. But while it was the custom before to speak slightingly of Wodrow, to-day he has come into his inheritance, so that he is widely and rightly accepted as a true and faithful witness.

Alston was one of the preachers before the Assembly in 1720. His text was Proverbs x. 9, "He that walketh uprightly walketh surely." All Wodrow says about it is—that it was "a very good sermon." A fuller reference in a letter Wodrow wrote to his wife on the 5th May 1726, occurs to the sermon preached by Alston when retiring from the Chair of the Assembly. "We had an excellent and very short sermon, that is, about an hour, from Mr Alston, last Moderator, upon 2 Cor. iv. 7, 'But we have this treasure in earthen vessels that the excellency, etc.' It was a most pointed sermon, and very solid and general. If he had been a little more particular as

to some things, some would have liked it better" (*Corr.* iii. 240). The criticism—" very short, that is about an hour"—might possibly hardly agree with the views of sermon hearers at the present day. It fell again to Alston to preach at the opening of the Assembly of 1730, but Wodrow's letters, if he attended that Assembly, are not in his published correspondence.

Attempts were made from time to time to take Alston away from his quiet country sphere. In 1710 a vacancy occurred in Edinburgh, to which the Town Council had the right of presentation. Both Alston and Lining of Lesmahagow were nominated. Alston had a majority of one vote. In the circumstance the patrons declined to go on, and both names were dropped. In 1729, on the death of Principal Wisheart, he was approached by Lord Milton and Lord Isla, with a view to his acceptance of the Chair of Divinity. This, however, says Wodrow in his *Analecta*, " did not altogether please him. He rather inclined to be Principal and a minister. He was sensible of the importance of teaching Divinity, and that being turned fifty, he was too old to change the course of his studys" (iv. 138). Elsewhere Wodrow gives a slightly different view of the proposal. Writing in 1731, he says :—" Mr Alston and I had a conversation, and he told me all that passed as to his being Principal and Professor. After he was last Moderator in 1729, when it was thought by the courtiers that he had managed that difficult post at that time without a breach, and before Mr Wisheart's death," Alston was sounded on the proposal that he should succeed Wisheart in the Principal's Chair. Very resolutely and very wisely the minister of Dirleton refused to entertain the suggestion before the vacancy occurred (iv. 259). In the end nothing came of it. The negotiations broke down, and Alston remained in his country parish. As his name was mentioned, too, in connection with the Principalship of Glasgow University in 1727, on the death of Principal Stirling, we cannot fail to see that Alston was a man of mark, deemed worthy by his fellows of high honour.

In 1723 Alston was asked to prepare the address of congratulation from the Assembly to the king, on the discovery and frustration of a fresh Jacobite conspiracy. Wodrow's comment upon it is very pointed. He says it is " florid enough." As the address is a fair illustration of Alston's style, part of it may be given in proof that his friend's criticism

is not wholly unwarranted. It runs in this way :—"The opening up of this deep laid plot and tracing it through so many of its various mazes and windings, the stripping it of those vails of darkness which were so industriously spread over it by men of the most artful cunning, and deliverance thereby wrought for your Majesty's sacred person and your royal family, and also for the dearest privileges of all your faithful subjects and of this Church in particular, will we hope be remembered by latest posterity, to the honour of God, and as one of the glories of your Majesty's most auspicious reign." The address closes with a long series of invocations in behalf of the king, of which these may serve as samples :—"May Protestant Sovereigns of your royal line always inherit your crown and these illustrious qualities with which your Majesty does now adorn it. May you be long honoured to do eminent service to God on earth, and at length enjoy a great reward in heaven." Possibly the pompous character of Alston's written style may have manifested itself in his ordinary conversation, and helped to fasten on him the soubriquet of the "proud priest of Dirleton."

The prominent part which Alston now occupied in the affairs of the Church marked him out as likely to reach the highest honour the Church could bestow. Accordingly it would create no surprise when, in 1725, he was called to preside over the deliberations of the General Assembly. Wodrow tells us that he was chosen "more harmoniously than I have seen for some years. (Mr David Anderson of Aberdeen had about fourteen votes, Mr Neil Campbell two votes, and the Moderator about 146)." To the "long and handsome speech" of the Commissioner, the Moderator, we are told, "made a very handsome return, well-worded. He took notice, in a particular manner, of the Royal Bounty [which this year had been largely increased], and hoped that the good effects of so charitable and Christian a grant would be one of the glories of his Majesty's reign, and would be returned seven-fold on his head and that of his progeny" (*Corr.* iii. 193). The same writer in his *Analecta*, before the Assembly had fairly entered upon its business, gives us the impression he had formed regarding the character for firmness which Alston was likely to show in the Chair. It seems that some of the leaders of the Assembly were averse to the election of Mr James Smith as a Commissioner from the Presbytery of Edinburgh to the Supreme Court, on the ground that he had

ruled the Assembly in 1723 with a good deal of force, and kept them in the background. Wodrow, accordingly, hints that in " Mr Alston they may find they have one in the Chair, who will press for a share in the management as much as Mr Smith " (iii. 204). Probably he had some difficulty in asserting himself. Smith of Cramond is said to have observed after this Assembly was over, " that since the Revolution till within this two or three years or thereby, our General Assemblies were entirely in the management of ministers; the matters to be handled were concerted amicably, and things were jointly carried on; but now particularly in the last Assembly, the Moderator and the matters of the Assembly were entirely managed by such as were on one side, and one person, Commissioner Drummond [frequently Lord Provost of Edinburgh], in a particular manner set up for dictator " (iii. 200).

Only one case of special interest came before the Assembly. To a vacant church in Aberdeen, the Town Council as heritors claimed the power to appoint a minister, irrespective of the wishes of the people. The matter reached the Assembly by appeal, when it was determined that a new call should be moderated in, after consultation with those members of the Church who were heads of families. Though a great majority voted against the nominee of the Council—James Chalmers of Dyke—the settlement was proceeded with, in direct opposition to the finding of the Assembly. Next year the matter came up again before the Supreme Court, with the result that the Assembly sanctioned the induction of the intruded minister, though disapproving of the instructions of the Assembly of 1725 being ignored.

Soon after the close of the Assembly at which he presided, Alston was made chaplain in ordinary to the king, and this honourable appointment was continued by George II. on his accession to the throne in 1727.

It was known that the Assembly of 1729 would bring to an end in one way or another the case of Professor Simson. A strong man was needed in the Chair to guide the debates with wisdom and firmness. It speaks well for Alston that in these circumstances he was called to take the Chair for the second time. At the close of the Assembly, Wodrow was able to write of the impartial attitude of the Moderator in the clearest terms. " Our Moderator," he says, " carried pretty equal and certainly acted outwardly a seeming fair part; yet I noticed him noting down some memorandums and hand-

ing them to Professor Hamilton and Mr George Logan, and some others; upon which we had some pretty suddain speeches and turns made in favour of Mr Simson. But all would not do" (*Ana.* iv. 61). Alston certainly was inclined to support the Glasgow Professor, but by his official position he was debarred from taking part in the discussion. We cannot, however, say anything about the contents of the notes he may have handed to Simson's sympathizers near him. This fact, however, may be mentioned. In the preceding Assembly, Alston had taken a very prominent part in the discussions on the case. On the whole he favoured Simson, though he thought "what was proven deserved censure, and by no means a small one" (Wodrow, *Corr.* iii. 383). At the same time Wodrow tells us that Alston "was for finding Mr Simson had not maintained heretical doctrine, now that he had declared." During the same debate in 1728, Alston put a question to Simson—"Whether Christ had all the divine perfections and Necessary Existence in particular as a person, as the Son, in the same way the Father had." Regarding this question and another put by George Logan, Wodrow acutely remarks to his wife:—"You may be sure the Professor was ready to give a most satisfying answer to both these questions, for I suppose they were concerted that he might have room to cleanse himself more fully than he had done" (p. 375).

The finding to which the Assembly came in Simson's case is well-known. It was admittedly a compromise. The Church was harassed. Opinion was divided. A certain section wished him to be reponed. Many sought his deposition. In his pleading, Simson was acute and skilful. He made explanations and retractions, which won waverers and even opponents to his side. But the case had to take end, and peace had to be brought again within the borders of the Church. Suspension from his Chair was unanimously agreed to. His salary was to be continued to him for life. He was still to retain his status as a minister of the Church and to be at liberty to preach, but he was to be no more a teacher of Divinity in Glasgow. In its issue the case finds a parallel in recent times in the removal from his Chair in Aberdeen of Professor W. Roberston Smith of the Free Church of Scotland. In both instances the inherent right of the Church to say whether a Professor should be allowed to continue teaching when he had lost the confidence of a large section of the Church, was maintained and acted upon.

But we are concerned only with Alston's action in the matter. All the opponents of Simson, for whose deposition they pressed, accepted the compromise with one exception. That exception was Thomas Boston. His words of dissent have often been quoted. They will stand repetition. "I dissent," he said, "in my own name and in name of all that shall adhere to me, and for myself alone if nobody shall adhere." "Whereupon," he tells us himself, "I was gravely accosted by the Moderator to bring me off from it. And when he had done speaking, I not being satisfied, had the paper ready, and with an audible voice formally made my dissent by reading it before them." Thereafter, "the Moderator spoke to me very pathetically; and I stood hearing all gravely without answering, until he said—Will you tear out the bowels of your mother?" This appeal told. The next day, after consultation with friends, Boston, for the sake of peace in the Church, agreed to the omission of his dissent from the records of the Assembly, though he adhered and proclaimed his adherence to every statement he had made in the paper he read.

Wodrow's version of the striking scene may also be given. It shows the faithfulness with which he could set forth the details of any incident he was describing. "The Moderator coaxed [Mr Boston]—if it be not an ill-word—and told him that he believed he would not incline to tear out the bowels of his mother, and desired him to pray and think before he took the burden of a step of that nature upon him, that might be the beginning of a breach in this Church. He answered, he appealed to God that he had not tearing in his view, but before the vote desired that it might be marked that he was against that sentence. The Moderator begged of him not to insist on that." When Boston expressed his willingness to consider his position, "the Moderator took care members should not make any replies to him" (*Corr.* iii. 445).

Thereafter Professor Simson was called in, when "the Moderator told him his affair had been long before the Church, and now they were come to a sentence, and he would hear it read by the clerk. After reading, the Moderator told him he was very sorry that the Assembly were obliged to come to what he might think a harsh sentence, but they could do no less. He hoped he would take it as out of the Lord's hand, and behave accordingly. Mr Simson appeared dissatisfied and in a fret, and they say was going away without

giving any answer, but after some steps he returned and said that he took it out of the hand of his heavenly Father ; wished it might be sanctified to him ; complained of errors in pamphlets against him, worse than anything proven against him ; declared he was still, and is of the same opinion with this Church in point of doctrine, and prayed what was done to him might not be to the prejudice of this Church, and went off " (p. 444).

Thus ended this long and vexatious case. If we are surprised that Boston stood alone in his courageous effort to conserve the truth as he believed it, let it be remembered that he was the only representative of the Marrow Men in the Assembly of 1729.

Two matters of interest in connection with the action of Boston may be mentioned. One was an irregular piece of procedure allowed by the Assembly. Though not a member of the Court, Gabriel Wilson of Maxton was given an opportunity of supporting the minister of Ettrick in his view of the inadequacy of the sentence passed upon Simson. The other was a meeting of members and others opposed to Simson, which was held the day before the formal decision in the case was reached. Its purpose was to dissuade Boston from the course he contemplated of recording his dissent from the proposed finding. At this meeting all the Marrow Men then in Edinburgh were present, including Hog and the two Erskines. Boston also was there. " What the issue will be, I know not," writes Wodrow, who likewise attended the meeting, " but I thought we softened him." What actually happened we know already. Boston did not retract one iota of his indictment, but refrained from pressing his right to have his objection engrossed in the minutes of the Assembly. During all the proceedings, Alston gained great credit by the skilful way in which he secured a unanimous finding against the accused Professor.

Little else falls to be noted about Alston. He died in the prime of life, on the 19th April 1733, in the thirtieth year of his ministry, and about the fifty-fourth of his age. His wife, whom he married on the 15th June 1705, was Janet, daughter of Matthew Reid, minister of Hoddam. In the churchyard at North Berwick there is a stone with this inscription :—" To the memory of Mr James Alston, at Redsyde in this parish, and eldest son of the Rev. James Alston, minister of Dirleton. Died 19th day of December,

1761, aged 54." Alston himself is said to have been buried in St Giles Churchyard, Edinburgh.

An interesting personal touch is given to the biography of Alston in a letter usually appended to Boston's *Memoirs*, and written in 1776 by " an eminent dissenting minister in Essex," who witnessed the scene in the Assembly of 1729, in which Boston protested against the leniency of the sentence passed upon Simson. The writer refers to Alston, as he stood up to appeal to Boston to withdraw his protest, as " a very solemn, grave man.

CHAPTER XX

NEIL CAMPBELL, MODERATOR, 1732 AND 1737

NEIL CAMPBELL, Principal of the University of Glasgow and Moderator on two occasions of the General Assembly, was the grandson of Archibald, the ninth Earl of Argyll, who was put to death in 1685. His father, Major John Campbell of Mamore, accompanied the Earl in his ill-fated attempt to remove James II. from the throne. For the part he took in that invasion, the Major was apprehended and sentenced to be executed as a traitor. This penalty was commuted for banishment along with the forfeiture of all his rights and property. After the Revolution the sentence was rescinded, and the Major fulfilled many public duties in Scotland till his death in 1729. His son, John, became the fourth Duke of Argyll on the failure of the direct line.

This, according to Wodrow, was the rumour regarding the parentage of Neil which was current during the lifetime of the Principal, though the historian takes occasion to say that he was doubtful of its truth (*Ana.* iv. 69).

While Neil was quite young, his mother, who was the daughter and heiress of Campbell of Pennymore, married the Rev. Patrick Campbell, laird of Torblaren and minister of Glenaray. Patrick was one of the outed ministers of 1662. Under the supervision of his step-father, the boy's education was carried on with great care, and in due time he entered the University. On the completion of his theological career, he received license from the Presbytery of Inveraray on the 21st June 1701. Fifteen months afterwards, on the 9th September 1702, he was ordained to the Highland parish of Kilmalie. He accepted the call to this extensive district on the distinct understanding that "in case the parish be not dismembered at the end of four years and erected into two, it shall be in his option to continue or remove as he shall see cause, without any other sentence. On the 21st March 1705, he intimated to the Presbytery that the parishioners of Kilmonivaig were dissatisfied with him going too frequently

to preach at the Braes of Lochaber and leaving them, the mother church. The Presbytery appointed him to preach at Kilmonivaig and Kilmalie for ordinary, as the two mother churches" (*Fasti, Kilmalie*). It was certainly in Campbell's power to withdraw from his sphere at any time, for reasons satisfactory to his conscience. Accordingly, the meaning of this statement can only be that he wished his parishioners to know that it was quite a possible thing that the charge of such a wide area would be too heavy for him, and that he felt himself at liberty to resign whenever he chose. His relationship to the head of the great territorial clan would render it easy for him to make this condition, and would incline the people to acquiesce in it.

Evidently the burden was soon felt by Campbell to be too much for his strength, and the Presbytery had to be appealed to by the people, for the purpose of bringing about a distribution of services throughout the parish, more suited to their needs than he was inclined or able to give. He did not shrink, however, from taking his share in the arduous work which fell to such a scattered Presbytery to overtake, for we find him in June 1706, appointed one of a deputation of two to visit "the bounds of Moidart, Arisaig, Morechires and Knoidart." At length he found it incumbent to resign his charge. More than once he had signified to the Presbytery "that his health and strength were exceedingly impaired by the insufferable fatigues of that vast charge (the most extensive perhaps in Scotland), and he was become so tender in body, that he must rather take the benefit of the condition above mentioned, than continue any longer." His resignation was felt to be "an irreparable loss to the people, who have a singular affection for him, and by the success of his ministry are reformed to such a degree, as could not be expected in so short a time as he hath been with them, and all the fruits of his labour will be lost if he be removed." This is good testimony to his earnestness and zeal. Whether the way was open to him at that time or not to engage elsewhere in work we cannot say, but on the 22nd June 1709, after seven years' labour in Kilmalie he was translated to Rosneath. His call to this parish is doubtless another proof of the interest taken in him by the Argyll family. To his new charge he was admitted on the 15th July. In this beautiful district, on the shores of the Gareloch, in which was situated one of the residences of the M'Callum Mohr, Campbell

continued for seven years, until on the death of old Patrick Simson, he was invited to succeed him in the charge of Renfrew. His induction to Renfrew took place on the 18th July 1716, and here he remained till his appointment to the Principalship of Glasgow University in 1728. His ministry in Renfrew was made memorable by the erection of a new church in 1726. His call to succeed a worthy like Simson, indicates the possession by Campbell of certain pulpit gifts. Further testimony is borne to his ministerial qualifications by an invitation given to him in 1719 to become minister of Greenock. The Presbytery Records give the following account of the proceeding :—" May 6, 1719. This day John Alexander, writer in Greenock, bearing commission from Sir John Schaw, gave in a presentation to Mr Neil Campbell, minister of the Gospel att Renfrew, to be minister att Greenock, bearing date May 5th, 1719, which the Presbyterie received and allowed to be marked with the usuall nota." Whether the presentation was withdrawn or declined is not stated. When a minister, David Turner by name, was settled in Greenock, Campbell was asked by the Presbytery " to preach the people's dutys," which he did from the text, " Know them which labour among you and are over you in the Lord." This was possible from the fact that Renfrew and Greenock at the time were within the bounds of the same Presbytery. It is not, however, a common thing for a service of this kind to be taken by a minister who has declined to come to the congregation, to whom in the name of the Presbytery he discourses on the obligations resting on them as members of the Church.

How far, even in Renfrew, Campbell was the free choice of the people is not certain. Wodrow, who had not the same affection for him as he had for Principal Stirling, makes the invidious remark that " Mr Campbell procured the presentation of his successor in Renfrew without consulting the session and people," and adds :—" Thus Mr Campbell was put in on Renfrew " (*Ana.* iv. 4). But as three years elapsed before Campbell's successor, Robert Patoun, was settled in Renfrew, the long vacancy may have been the chief cause why he became so eager to see his old people in the enjoyment of a settled ministry. His stay in Renfrew, too, helped possibly to make his position afterwards in the University somewhat difficult, when he was called upon to take action in connection with Patrick Simson's son, the well-known Professor of

Divinity. His friendship with him may have inclined Campbell to put the kindliest construction on the unguarded statements of the heretical Professor.

The appointment to the highest place in the University of Glasgow lay with the Crown. Again we may trace in the offer made to him of this great honour, the influence of the house of Argyll, whose head at the time, the second Duke, was able, as Pope reminds us, to "shake alike the senate and the field," and who held in his hand a large part of the patronage of Scotland. It cannot be said that Campbell was fitted by remarkable scholarship, or even by the possession of tact, for the difficult sphere which he occupied after the death of Principal Stirling. Several members of the Faculty were by no means enamoured of the new appointment. Here is what Wodrow says of the situation under date the 8th November 1727 :—" Mr Dunlop and the Masters on that side are not pleased, and the other side are dissatisfied, so that I doubt Mr Campbell's exchange will be neither much for his outward emolument or inward comfort. How far Principal Campbell is foundered in his languages and learning must be left to time. It's a pity that men of brighter parts, and that have had time to read and improve in learning, are not put at the head of learned Societys. This was the great objection to Principal Stirling, and yet he had much solid learning of men and things" (*Ana.* iii. 145). All this is not very complimentary. Soon the day came for Campbell to deliver his inaugural address. The date was the 8th February 1728. The ministers of Glasgow did not show much cordiality on the occasion. Wodrow thus comments on it :—" Mr Neil Campbell had his inaugural oration and was admitted Principal at Glasgow. There were but two of the town ministers present, Mr M. and Mr W. [M'Laurin and Wishart]. He is likely to have a pretty uneasy life for some time" (*Ana.* iii. 447). This prognostication unfortunately turned out to be true. In January 1731, the same witness records :— " He has nobody now in the Faculty who joyns him save Mr Simson. All the rest beard him in everything. The meetings of theologues [students of theology] are but just a form. The Principal only hears discourses. He has not, this session, had above two or three prelections" (iv. 198). Mr Coutts in his *History of the University of Glasgow*, says of him : —" He was not a man of exceptional learning or administrative ability, but he entered on office at a time when the land-

marks of the constitution had been laid down afresh, and when the conditions of the University might be regarded as prosperous and hopeful" (p. 214). Wodrow pursues Campbell to the Assembly with his ungracious remarks. On the 9th May 1728, he writes :—" Mr Neil Campbell, our new Principal, made a very poor appearance this Assembly."

It is noteworthy that two of the four Principals in Scotland supported Professor Simson in his trial. These were Campbell of Glasgow, and Chalmers of Aberdeen. Hadow of St Andrews and Wisheart of Edinburgh were opposed to him. In the first Assembly after his appointment to the Principal's Chair, Campbell, backed doubtless by the Faculty, laid upon the table a protest, in which while acknowledging the appropriateness of the Assembly dealing with the accused Professor, he contended that the rights of the University of Glasgow to judge its own members were in no way impinged. Stirling had done the same in the first Simson case. Wodrow is quite clear on the point. On the 6th May 1728, he writes to his wife :—" Mr Neil Campbell gave in a written protestation in his own name ; in his speech he signified that it was matter of sorrow to him and he doubted not to the whole Assembly, that a Professor of Divinity so long in the Church and so marked for his learning, should stand at the bar of the Assembly under a libel of error ; but it was a great satisfaction to him that this cause was to be judged by the judicatory on earth he wished most to determine this affair ; that for himself he entirely subjected this matter to the Assembly, but he begged liberty to present a protestation, as his predecessor had done and was received, that the determination of the Assembly might not affect the just rights of the University to judge their members as such. Mr Stirling, in his protestation, had insert his owning the Assembly's power of judging in the protestation ; Mr Campbell delivered this only in words. My Lord Justice-Clerk moved that since we had two protestations given in in this process, the Assembly might declare their power of judging members of the University in point of error, and record [it]. This was backed by Mr Smith and several other members. My Lord Grange, and the President and Mr Alston had speeches all asserting the Assembly's right, but reckoned *licet protestare* ; and that the Assembly, by judging, asserted their right in fact, and Mr Hamilton joined them ; and Mr Simson's being at the bar was the most effectual asserting of the Assembly's power. And so after

some debate, the protestation was received in common form" (*Corr.* iii. 343).

In connection with Simson's case it is interesting to remember that some people felt a difficulty in dealing with the Glasgow Professor on the ground, that as he held a Crown appointment, his removal from the Chair would be an interference with the royal prerogative. In the end of course no violence was done to the rights of the king, inasmuch as the emoluments attached to the Chair were secured to Simson, although he was prohibited from teaching. No successor was appointed to Simson until after his death. In the Assembly of the following year, Principal Campbell offered to produce testimony from the University in favour of Simson. A good deal of discussion took place as to the propriety of receiving a document of this character. It was at last accepted, but when read it was found to contain "very little indeed to vouch what the Professor had said, but an attestation of his orthodoxy and of their power to judge doctrine, and a declaration upon a paper given by Mr Simson, of their being satisfied as to his orthodoxy. They own the Assembly's power to judge their members, but declare they think the suspension should be taken off" (*ibid.* iii. 417). Afterwards in a speech on the main question, Campbell "declared he had conversed with the Professor, and had found him as far as he could judge, sincere in all his declarations; that his reasonings at the bar were in self-defence, and not arraignings of the procedure of the last Assembly; that his speech yesterday, he thought, was a most orthodox one, and pleasing to all he had spoke to" (p. 424). All this indicates on the part of the Principal a good deal of sympathy with the libelled Professor. His attitude towards him is further set before us in a paragraph in the *Analecta*, which tells us that in January 1730, after Simson's suspension had taken place, "Principal Campbell created great feeling by unwisely saying to the students that he would be reponed by next Assembly" (iv. 102). This certainly was a most imprudent remark to make, but it must be viewed in the light of the extra work which was laid upon Campbell by the withdrawal of Simson from the teaching staff. As no substitute was appointed to lecture on Divinity, it fell to the Principal to conduct the class. To this task he did not take very kindly, though he continued to teach in a more or less regular fashion during the eleven years that elapsed till Simson died. "We hear," says

Wodrow, "that the Principal who teaches the bursars or rather hears their discourses, once or twice a week, should have lately told the students in the hall that he was sorry they were so little waited on, but it was not his office" (*Corr.* iii. 460). In writing to Benjamin Colman of Boston, the same authority gives a rather unflattering account of academic life in Glasgow. "The diligence and success of the Professors in your College," he says, "puts me to thankfulness to the Father of lights. It is one of the matters of the greatest importance that our universities flourish. I wish I could give you the like accounts of ours; but we are at present [1730] under a cloud; parties and divisions are got in most unaccountably, and our college discipline slackens. Since May last, I have not met with Principal Campbell; he has been very little at home. In the summer and till the College meet in October, he generally is in the country" (p. 467). In another place, however, he speaks more hopefully. "Principal Campbell," he states, "takes up lessons on Divinity under Mr Simson's sentence. At first few came, but in after months he has forty or upwards attending lessons three days a week" (*Ana.* iv. 16).

For thus undertaking duty in room of the suspended Professor, Campbell claimed remuneration, though he did not do so till 1748. The Faculty, however, maintained that the Principal was obliged, and always had been obliged, to teach Divinity. Eventually as an honorarium, they granted him the sum of £200. The claim he made for payment for taking Simson's place is not to be regarded as indicative of a mercenary spirit. Three years after his appointment to the Principalship, as we are told in the *Munimenta*, he "declared he was willing that £22 formerly paid to the Principal, should be applied to augment smaller salaries of Professors, as His Majesty should think fit" (i. lxx.) Such a kindly act should perhaps have softened the opposition displayed towards him by some of his colleagues.

The place which Campbell by this time seems to have gained for himself in the esteem of a large portion of the Church, was shown by his election in 1732 to the Chair of the Assembly. Under his presidency, the overture which had been sent to Presbyteries in the preceding year regarding the settlement of ministers in vacant parishes, was passed into a standing law, in spite of the fact that it had failed to clear the Barrier Act. Such a course followed by the Supreme Court of

the Church is difficult to explain. Clearly it was illegal. The overture had been repudiated by the bulk of the Presbyteries. Eighteen approved of it, eighteen gave no opinion, twelve required material amendments, and thirty-one absolutely condemned it. No excuse can be offered for the action of the Assembly. It can only be said that the antipathy felt towards Erskine and his friends, led the majority of the members into this most unconstitutional procedure. The practical result of this illegal action was to annihilate the call given by a vacant congregation to a minister, in so far as a call " had always previously been regarded as conveying the mind of the congregation " in relation to the nominee of the elders and heritors. This was plainly a subversal of the principles and practice of the Presbyterian Church from the period of the Reformation (Hetherington, *Hist.* 641).

Five years later, Campbell was placed again in the Moderator's Chair. The custom of electing a minister more than once to preside over the Assembly was dying out. Only two instances occur after that of Campbell. The renewed choice of the Principal of Glasgow University is a proof of a fitness in him, for which Wodrow's depreciatory remarks hardly incline us to look. Nothing of special moment took place in the deliberations of the Supreme Court.

Two other marks of honour were conferred upon Campbell during his public career. In 1718 he was elected a guild brother and burgess of the city of Glasgow. In 1734 George II. made him one of his chaplains. The deed appointing him to this office formed one of the exhibits in the " Old Glasgow " Exhibition in 1894.

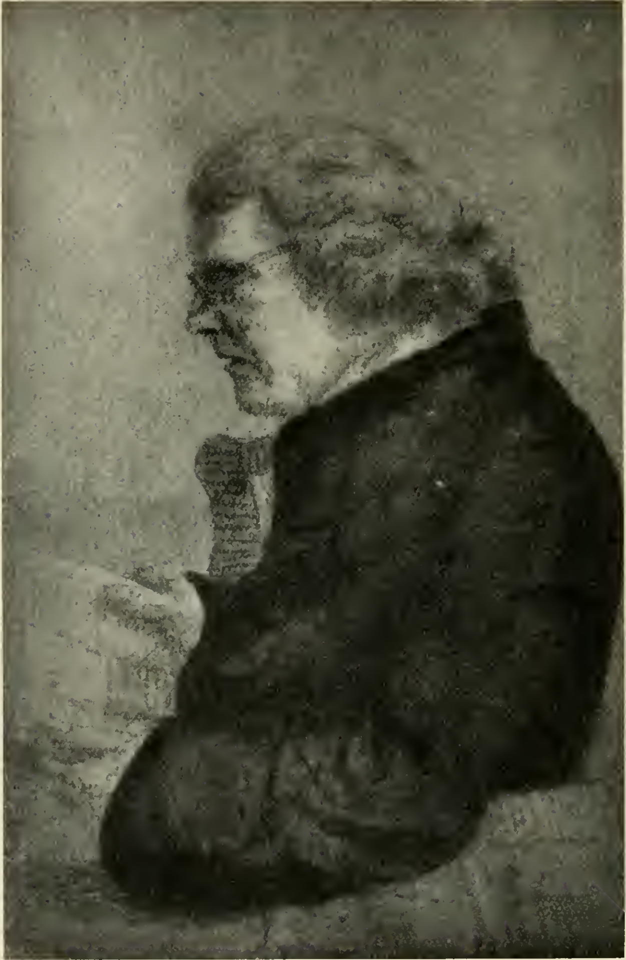
A fact which throws some light upon his home life is recorded in the *Forfeited Estates Papers* published by the Scottish History Society. In the Memorial presented by Simon Fraser for the restoration of his ancestral property, it is stated that " The memorialist was sent to school at Glasgow in the year 1739, and was boarded in the house of the late Principal Campbell " (p. 103). All through his life, Campbell seems to have kept on terms of intimacy with the house of Argyll. In August 1729, for example, we are told that " towards the end of the month, the Duke of Argyll, in his way to Edinburgh from the Highlands, came to Glasgow about four of the clock, and stayed all night in the Principal's " (Maidment's *Argyll Papers*).

Campbell was married in 1705 to a lady bearing his own

name—Henreta Campbell. Ten children were born to them, the greater number of whom died in infancy. One son, Neil, matriculated at Glasgow in 1733, and became a clerk in the Government Survey Office at Woolwich. Colin, a younger son, studied theology and became minister first at Eaglesham in 1741, then at Kilmaronock, and finally in his father's old church at Renfrew. One daughter was a well-known figure in University circles. Carlyle of Inveresk, who studied at Glasgow for a time, has an interesting reference to her. He asked his friend, James Edgar, to give him a letter of introduction to someone of importance and influence connected with the University. "He gave me one," says Carlyle, "to Miss Mally Campbell, the daughter of the Principal. And when I seemed surprised at his choice, he added that I would find her not only more beautiful than any woman there, but more sensible and friendly than all the Professors put together, and much more useful to me. This I found to be literally true" (*Autobiog.* p. 72). In 1748 Mally became the wife of Richard Betham, for some time collector of Customs in the Isle of Man. Their only son, Campbell Betham, matriculated in Glasgow in 1781, and took the degree of M.D. in Edinburgh, six years later. Another daughter was married to John Somerville, younger, of Park. Mary Campbell, a granddaughter of the Principal, and widow of Captain Willox, died at Bexley Heath, Dartford, in 1846 (*MS. Notes in Glas. Univ.*)

Campbell was struck with paralysis in 1753. He continued, however, to hold office till his death on the 22nd June 1761. For thirty-three years he had ruled over the University. He was buried in Blackfriars Churchyard. Mrs Campbell survived her husband a few years. Apparently she had gone to live in her husband's old parish of Renfrew, for in the Commissariot Registers of Hamilton and Campsie the will of "Henreta Campbell, residenter in Renfrew, relict of Mr Neil Campbell, Principal of the College of Glasgow," is recorded on the 30th July 1767.

Descendants of the Principal remain to the present day. The well-known "modern apostle," Alexander Neil Somerville, was one of his great-great-grandsons.



JOHN GOWDIE

CHAPTER XXI

JOHN GOWDIE, MODERATOR, 1733

JOHN GOWDIE took his Master's degree in Edinburgh, on the 30th April 1700. As he was licensed by the Presbytery of Kelso on the 27th January 1702, it is very probable that he was a native of the county of Roxburgh. Scott in the *Fasti* gives 1682 as the year of his birth. This would make him only twenty when he was sent out as a preacher with the imprimatur of the Church. As an old Act of 1638 was still operative, in accordance with which no student of divinity could receive license till he reached the age of twenty-one, we must conclude that Gowdie was born at least one or two years earlier than the date mentioned by Scott.

In 1704, a call came to the youthful licentiate from the rural parish of Earlston. His ordination took place on the 9th August. Here Gowdie remained for twenty-six years, quietly doing the work of a country minister, and showing a spirit of earnestness which gained for him the commendation of his famous co-presbyter, Thomas Boston. As Gowdie took a very prominent part in the affairs of the Church, throwing the weight of his influence in opposition to the Evangelical section, represented at first by Boston and afterwards by the Erskines, it is extremely pleasing to meet with the testimony borne to Gowdie's character so freely by the minister of Ettrick. The following passage from Boston's *Memoirs* brings this out. The date is 1712, and the subject of discussion in the Presbytery was the Abjuration Oath. "I had from that time a particular regard for Mr John Gowdie, minister at Earlston, a grave and learned man, on account of his candour and ingenuity, though joined with principles very contrary to mine ; he owned that the ministers of 1648 would not have taken that oath according to their principles. And in this regard to that brother, I had been since that time all along confirmed ; and even in the Assembly, 1729, in Professor Simson's affair, the man dealing plainly and candidly, according to his light, though in such matters

of a more public nature, he and I were still on opposite sides of the question." One who could thus win the esteem of the great supporter of the *Marrow of Modern Divinity*, must have been possessed of an honesty and ability of no mean order. Though this debate occurred in 1712, Boston did not write his *Memoirs* till 1730. At that date, therefore, he continued to hold the opinion regarding Gowdie which he expressed eighteen years before. But such a kindly feeling between the two men did not keep them from the frank avowal of their own views.

From time to time in the local Presbytery a discussion arose on doctrine or preaching, and both of these topics were looked upon in different ways by Gowdie and his co-presbyter. Boston thus refers to the matter :—" On August 30 [1713] continuing my ordinary, Hosea xiv., I did withal return to explain the catechism ; but began at the duty which God requireth of man. Which brings to mind an occasional encounter before our Presbytery with Mr John Gowdie ; who happening to tell us of his preaching catechetical doctrine, showed that he had cursorily gone over the ten commands, as judging that best for the case of the people. I found myself obliged to declare before them all, that I was quite of another mind ; the fullest unfolding of the holy commandments being necessary to discover the need of Christ, both to saints and sinners. But I have always observed narrow thoughts of the doctrine of free grace, to be accompanied with narrow thoughts of the extent of the holy law."

Boston's kindly criticism of an opponent of the Marrow like Gowdie was quite in harmony with the attitude of Ebenezer Erskine, who freely characterized many of those who differed from him as " great and good men " (*Gospel Truth*, p. 32.) The courtesy of these opponents towards each other is most pleasing to notice. It was continued even though the Marrow Men had to say of Gowdie, that he was " most violent in the controversy against them."

In 1728 the minister of Earlston preached before the Assembly. Wodrow wrote to his wife briefly about the sermon. The text was very evangelical, 1 John v. 12, " He that hath the Son hath life." " He gave us," says Wodrow, " an account who this Son was, for about quarter of an hour, in Scriptural expressions, very well laid together, Prov. viii., Isaiah ix., John i., Col. ii. 3., and the rest was practical " (*Corr.* iii. 343). This is a fairly strong certificate in favour

of Gowdie's orthodoxy. In the same Assembly, Gowdie also took a leading place in the Simson case. The speech he delivered during the debate bristled with quotations from the Fathers, many of them in the original Greek and Latin. It lasted, we are told, two hours, but it must have been the result of many years of patient study in the Earlston manse. "Mr Gowdie," records the faithful historian, "spoke long against the relevancy and proof, and adduced passages from the ancients, Athanasius, Eusebius and others, wherein self-existence, or ἀγέννητος, was taken for the personal property of the Father, and *Summus Deus*, independency, which was waived, and the title of the only true God; and referred to Potavius and Sandius for more, and cited Dr Bull, Bishop Pearson on the Creed, for taking most of these as included in the personal property of the Father, and read many citations from Greek and Latin; and since authors had taken the terms so, they were ambiguous, and the students might be warned to take them in a sense consistent with the Father's property. He did not see that Mr Simson had given this sense as what he approved; but had said in all senses, save that peculiar to personal property, they were applicable to the Son. This was the great appearance from that side, but not one word of Necessary Existence, which was the main [thing] quarrelled" (iii. 370).

Lord Grange replied to this speech, stating "that all the passages cited by Mr Gowdie were, and many more, in Dr Clarke, and read them as his vouchers for what was his opinion, which we all knew was heretical." Gowdie's attitude to the views of the Glasgow Professor need not be referred to further, though he was a member of the Assembly of 1729, which brought the case to a close. But notice must be taken of the manner in which his "great appearance" was hit off in the *Answer to John Brig's Ballads* by Crawford and Stewart.

> "The modest John Goudy, more learned and more wise,
> With a two hours' harangue, had intended
> To conclude the whole cause and his neighbours despise,
> Who had Simson so weakly defended.
> But a motion for peace he durst not oppose,
> This adventure did quickly prevent,
> While a clogg'd and confirmed suspension did close
> The Professor's affairs with consent."

These references to Gowdie show him to have reached a leading position in the councils of the Church. This was apparent in the Assembly of 1729, when he received the honour of being "named" by the Moderator. This was in

accordance with an old custom, still so far kept up, by which the Moderator called upon the most influential members to address the Court. The custom was falling into desuetude, but it was observed on this occasion by Alston, who occupied the Chair. Gowdie, though thus called upon to speak, " said he was willing to hear others " (iii. 426).

Nothing has come down to us of Gowdie's work in his country parish. One or two references occur to him in *The Household Book of Lady Grisell Baillie.* In 1706 and 1710, it is noted that the " vicarage of Coltcrooks," amounting to £10, was paid to him as minister of Earlston. Another entry in the year 1709, presents to the mind a picture of Gowdie's church with its roof covered not with slates, but with heather. For in that year, Lady Grisell paid seven shillings sterling " for hather and thicking of the church of Earlston."

In 1730, Gowdie received a call from the City Fathers to occupy the pulpit of Lady Yester's in Edinburgh. He was admitted to his new charge on the 23rd July. Wodrow tells us that there was considerable opposition made to his coming to Edinburgh, the reason being the complimentary one, that some people " had in view to make him Professor of Divinity " (*Ana.* iv. 138). He remained, however, only two years in Lady Yester's. On the 14th December 1732, he was translated to the New North Church in succession to James Smith, who had been promoted to the Chair of Divinity in the University. His tenure of the New North lasted only a few months, for on the appointment of Smith to the Principalship, Gowdie was loosed from his charge, and installed in the vacant Chair of Theology on the 1st August 1733. Two months earlier he gained the highest honour within his reach, when he was asked to preside over the deliberations of the Assembly. This invitation he accepted.

The Assembly of which Gowdie was appointed Moderator, was perhaps the most memorable which had been held since the Revolution. For there was taken at it the irrevocable step of remitting the case of the Seceding Brethren to the Commission, with full powers first to suspend them, and then to proceed to higher censure, if they did not express regret for their procedure and withdraw their protest. Only one result could follow. Both parties were firm, and no concession was likely to come from either side. The Commission met in August. The Four Brethren gave in a written Representation in defence of their position. It produced no effect.

Sentence of suspension was pronounced on them, and they were summoned to appear before the November Commission. The whole Church looked forward to this meeting with throbbing interest. Many members shrank from taking the final step. The Moderate leaders were absolutely decided. The question was put—" Shall we proceed to the higher censure, or shall we delay ? " The votes were equal. It would be difficult to find a parallel case in Church history. Everything depended on the Moderator. A weaker man would have trembled. Few would have wondered if the occupant of the Chair had craved the favour of the Court, and begged to be relieved of such a weight of responsibility, by sending the case on to the Assembly. But the orders to the Commission were specific. They were commanded to do the deed, and Gowdie ruled the Court. A death-like stillness prevailed. Short and sharp was the word which came from the Moderator's lips—" Proceed," and the doom of the Seceders was fixed.

We must not judge Gowdie too harshly. He was in a difficult place. Every other minister who voted had given his personal opinion, " Yes " or " No." In the Chair, Gowdie had only a casting vote. His personal views were opposed to Erskine and his friends. The Assembly had given him instructions. He would not shrink from expressing his own opinion, or from carrying out the command of the Supreme Court. And so the die was thrown, and the Seceding Brethren were loosed from their charges, and all ministers in the Church were debarred from holding communion with them. It hardly needs to be recorded that the four ministers formed themselves into a Presbytery at Gairney Bridge, and that the final act of deposition was not carried out till 1740.

Gowdie had passed his fifty-first year when he undertook the duties of the Chair of Theology. The summer of 1733 was spent by him in preparing for the ensuing College session. Various accounts have reached us regarding the fitness of Gowdie for his new work, and the measure of success with which he met among the students. Carlyle of Inveresk, who was a member of his class in 1740-1, gives in his *Autobiography* no flattering estimate of the Professor's ability. " I passed some part of the winter," he says, " in Edinburgh attending the Divinity class which had no attractions, as the Professor, though said to be learned, was dull and tedious in his lectures, insomuch that at the end of seven years he had only lectured half through Pictet's *Compend of Theology*." " There was one advantage," he continues, " in attending the lectures of

a dull Professor, viz., that he could form no school, and the students were left entirely to themselves, and naturally formed opinions far more liberal than those they got from the Professor." "In the following winter, I attended the Divinity Hall at Edinburgh again for three or four months, and delivered a discourse *De Fide Salvifica*, a very improper subject for so young a student, which attracted no attention from any one but the Professor, who was pleased with it as it resembled his own Dutch Latin." To Lord Elibank, Carlyle remarked that "the Professor was dull, Dutch and prolix." Bower records of Gowdie in his *History of the University of Edinburgh*, that "he was generally esteemed a man of moderate abilities, but very attentive to the discharge of his academic duties" (ii. 283). Reid in his *History of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland*, characterizes him as a man of kindred spirit to Professor Hamilton, "though of inferior ability" (iii. 327).

For twenty-one years Gowdie occupied the Divinity Chair. In 1754 he was raised to the Principalship, and in this office he continued till his death. Sir Alexander Grant in referring to his Principalship, indicates that during it nothing remarkable occurred, which he adds, need not be wondered at, as Gowdie was more than seventy-one when he was appointed. Other honours by this time had come to him. In 1735 he was chosen by George II. to be one of the royal chaplains. At the same time he held the office of Dean of the Chapel Royal. Of this appointment, however, for some reason he was deprived in June 1744. On the 13th March 1750, he received the degree of D.D. On the 19th February 1762, he died and was buried in Greyfriars Churchyard, "a few paces to the north of Henderson's tomb" (Brown's *Greyfriars*, 307).

Gowdie was twice married. His first wife was Jean Deas, daughter of Alexander Deas, burgess in Edinburgh. To her he was married on the 3rd January 1706. Wodrow preserves a bit of gossip about her which shows that their home life was not ideal. In his *Analecta* he writes:—"Poor man, [Mr Gowdie] is in very bad circumstances with his family. His wife is distempered and a great cross to him. She is gone to the country, but threatens every week to return." The date of this entry is 1731 (iv. 212). By her Gowdie had a son and a daughter. The daughter, Elizabeth, was married in 1743 to the Rev. John Hill of St Andrews, but died in 1747. The son, John, succeeded his father in Earlston, where he

was ordained in 1730. He died in London in 1777. Gowdie's second wife was Anne Ker, daughter of Walter Ker of Littledean, whom he must have known in the old Earlston days. To her he was married on the 24th August 1743, just at the time his own daughter left for a home of her own. She survived him for a couple of years, dying on the 21st April 1764.

A remarkable incident took place in Earlston during the summer of 1761. The minister of the parish had a son, also named John, who was licensed in August 1760. One Sabbath in the year mentioned, the three Johns—father, son and grandson—all preached in Earlston Church. Probably this is a unique event. Within twelve months, however, both the Principal and his grandson passed away in death. As Principal, Gowdie occupied the official residence set apart for the head of the University. We are told that to Dr William Robertson, the famous Church leader, who succeeded him in the Principalship, was assigned " the house with the orchard in the said University, as the same was lately possessed by the deceased Mr John Gowdie."

Three sermons were published by Gowdie. In 1734 there appeared the sermon he preached at the opening of the General Assembly on Christ weeping over Jerusalem, Luke xix., 41, 42. The somewhat bald divisions of this sermon may be discovered from the three heads under which he treats his subject.

1. The great things that our good and gracious God has done for this Church, and the happy circumstances which by his favourable Providence we are now in.

2. To consider some of these things which seem to belong to our peace and which we ought to know in this our day.

3. To show the strong obligations we are under to know them.

In the following year he issued a sermon which he preached in connection with the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge. It is entitled *The Propagation of the Gospel and the Blessed Effects thereof*, and is based on Isaiah xi. 6-9. In 1736 he published another sermon—*The Salvation of Souls, the Desire of every Faithful Minister.*

A number of variants of his name appear. Goudie, Goudy, Gaudie and Gaudy are to be met with, along with the more modern form of Goldie.

The portrait of Gowdie is taken from a pencil drawing in the possession of Lord Binning at Mellerstain, near Kelso.

CHAPTER XXII

JAMES GORDON, MODERATOR, 1734

James Gordon, Moderator of the Assembly in 1734, was a graduate of Marischal College, Aberdeen. After completing his theological curriculum in the same city, he was licensed by the Presbytery of Turriff on the 7th August 1705. As his surname indicates, he belonged to a famous Highland clan, and all through his long career he showed a sturdiness of character which gained for him a trusted place in the councils of the Church. His lot was cast in a variety of spheres. He was settled in succession in four different parishes, but he is best known as Gordon of Alford, because there on the banks of the Don, he spent the longest part of his working life. Of his parentage and early days no record seems to have reached us.

Gordon's first charge was Premnay, in the Presbytery of Garioch. The pulpit had been vacant for nearly two years. By the lapse of time, the right of presentation had fallen into the hands of the Presbytery. They fixed their choice on Gordon, and duly ordained him on the 25th April 1706, the parishioners in all probability expressing themselves in some way in favour of the youthful presentee. In this quiet district he remained for three years. The neighbouring parish of Bourtie, within the bounds of the same Presbytery, gave him a call which he accepted. On the 1st June 1709, he was inducted to his new sphere, which judging from its present population of about 400 inhabitants, was even smaller than his first charge. The leisure time he enjoyed was devoted to the study of Church law and also to the discharge of the duties of Synod Clerk, an office to which he was appointed in 1714.

Early in 1717 a call was addressed to him from the parish of St Fergus. The case came up before the Synod, which refused to put the call into his hands. Perhaps the Synod had information of another call which was about to be presented to him. On this occasion, again, it came from a

Presbytery which, *jure devoluto*, sought to have the minister of Bourtie within its bounds. The call came from the Presbytery of Alford. The parish was Alford itself. Gordon accepted the call and was inducted on the 30th July 1717. The Presbytery of Alford, of which Gordon now became a member, had an unworthy name. Mr David Brown, a correspondent of Wodrow, in writing to the minister of Eastwood from Aberdeen in October 1716, gives us the following painful picture of the Donside brethren :—" The Presbytery of Alford had a meeting lately at Alford town, the seat of their Presbytery, where after their work was over, they went all together and took their bottle that very hearty, that they fell out among themselves, and beat one another's skins to very good purpose, being all beastly drunk ; but this came not before the Synod, being done away privately " (*Corr.* ii. 210). Accordingly, Gordon's companions in office were not men of the highest order.

The preceding minister of Alford, Andrew Jeffrey by name, who had been settled so long before as 1679, had cherished all through his career, the Episcopalian views which he entertained on his ordination as deacon by the Bishop of Edinburgh in 1674. Jeffrey, therefore, is one instance among many which prove the leniency of the leaders of the Church in 1690. On giving the required guarantees at the Revolution, he was permitted to continue to act as minister and to draw the stipend of the parish. And no question seems to have arisen during the twenty-seven years which had elapsed, to cause the Presbytery to re-consider his connection with Alford. But a fresh element was imported into the situation when the Rebellion of 1715 took place. Then Jeffrey's old Jacobite tendencies broke out in all their vigour. He espoused the cause of the Pretender, praying in public for his success. In this he had the support of a large number of his parishioners. The Presbytery, however, were loyal to the Protestant succession, and in due course deposed their Jacobite brother.

It is interesting to notice how the Presbytery of Alford supported the House of Hanover with great enthusiasm. There were three other cases within their jurisdiction, of ministers who took up the same position as Jeffrey. The Presbytery deposed them all. These three cases furnish additional proof of the generosity of the Presbyterian Church. For the ministers concerned had been settled in their parishes

for more than thirty years. Accordingly, we find in this small Presbytery of Alford, four ministers who were retained in their benefices after the Revolution, until they showed themselves incorrigible at the time of the first Rebellion. One of them, the minister of Strathdon, though he gave only a modified support to the Pretender, was swept away by the stern hand of the Presbytery. His attitude towards the disloyal movement is seen from the prayer he was in the habit of offering in public worship. He asked that God would incline the heart of the Pretender " to be a true Protestant, and if it were God's will he would bring him to the throne who was lawful heir to our native kings, and if not that God would be pleased to incline him to set his heart upon an heavenly kingdom " (*Fasti*, iii. 564). One cannot help feeling sympathy for this interesting old man, who abhorred a Popish king but loved the Stewart race, in being dismissed from his ministry and cut off from his emoluments. Yet on the other hand, we cannot help being impressed with the liberal treatment measured out to him and his companions by their Presbyterian brethren. Among the hard things that are said of the Church of the Revolution by its detractors this generous policy which its leaders pursued in Alford and throughout the country, is to be accounted to them for righteousness.

We are concerned, however, only with Jeffrey. As we learn from the *Historical Papers* of the Spalding Club, Jeffrey on his deposition, somewhat naturally refused to leave the home to which he had brought his wife, and in which his children had been born. But the decree of the Presbytery was valid, and if necessary the civil arm could be called in to make it effective. Indeed, criminal letters against all the Episcopal ministers within the bounds of the Synod of Aberdeen had been obtained, so that it was impossible for them to continue in the enjoyment of their benefices. Application was accordingly made to the Sheriff, " with respect to the eviction of Mr Andrew Jeffrey." Probably out of sympathy for the old man, the Sheriff did not exercise his authority immediately. The period of grace served its purpose. Jeffrey came to see that there was no way out of the position into which he had brought himself. So we are told that it was at length reported to the Presbytery that the manse of Alford was " rid and void."

Yet, in all probability, Gordon's coming to Alford was not

without its disappointing circumstances. A good deal of the kindly feeling of the parishioners for their old minister would show itself in unfriendliness, more or less direct, towards his successor. Gordon, however, was a man who could make his way even into the heart of an enemy. And his ministry of nineteen years in the parish was comfortable to himself and valued by the people.

In 1733 Gordon was elected Professor of Divinity in King's College, his Alma Mater. This is a proof of his studious habits and scholarly attainments, but for some reason the appointment was not sustained by the civil court. In the following year, he was raised to the Moderator's Chair. No minister from a northern charge had presided over the Assembly since the Revolution. It was full time that the honour should be given to one whose sphere of labour was far removed from the metropolis. The selection of Gordon to guide the proceedings in 1734 is a testimony to the wisdom and calmness of his judgment, and to his sympathy with evangelical truth. The time was critical. Many people felt that the preceding Assembly had gone too far on the path of sternness, in the attitude it assumed towards Erskine and his friends. A desire was expressed that the steps taken should be retraced if possible. First of all, therefore, it was a thing to be aimed at to have a man in the Chair who would be acceptable to all parties. In Gordon they found the combination of qualities for which they looked. He had never occupied an extreme position. He loved the Church, and at the same time, he regretted that there did not seem to be room enough in it to keep the Seceders. His presence in the Chair, accordingly, was a good omen.

Under his guidance the Assembly began at once to remove some of the obstacles which Erskine had found too difficult to surmount. Four years before, it had been enacted that reasons of dissent against the findings of Church Courts "should not be entered in the register, but be kept *in retentis*, to be laid before the superior judicatories." This despotic procedure, by which members of Presbyteries were not permitted to have recorded their dissent from any measure of which they did not approve, was now abrogated. Further, the Act of 1732, which had been passed though it had not cleared the Barrier Act, and by which ministers could be settled in parishes, simply on the nomination of heritors and elders apart from the Church members, was also annulled.

It was likewise decreed that the Synod of Perth and Stirling should take into consideration the case of the Seceding Brethren without any reference to the judgment which had already been passed upon it. Frankly speaking, this was a great step to take on the path of conciliation, and it says much for the temper of the Assembly of 1734 that such a line of action was pursued.

Erskine, however, did not deem it wise to enter again into the Church which he had left. The rescinding of these obnoxious acts was a triumph for his views, but he felt it only to be temporary. The prevailing party was against him, and he would not trust himself to a chance victory. Besides, he thought that the Church should not only recall the unconstitutional acts, but cry "Peccavi," because it had allowed these acts to stain the pages of its statute book. Be that as it may, Gordon had the high honour of presiding over this most conciliatory Assembly, and lending the weight of his influence to the cause of unity and peace.

The Commission of Assembly took additional means of showing the Church's earnestness in drawing back the Seceders into its fold, by sending Gordon along with Willison of Dundee and M'Intosh of Errol to London, in order to plead for the abolition of patronage. In the following year, the Assembly acted for itself, and appointed Gordon once more, along with Anderson of St Andrews, to appeal to the Crown for the removal of this pressing grievance. To make it clear that laymen also were wishful for the same object, Lieutenant-Colonel Erskine of Carnock was chosen to go along with them. But it was all of no use. Patronage was yet to throw its dark shadow over the Church of Scotland for well nigh a century and a half, before Parliament was willing to remove it, and many others besides the four Seceding Brethren had to pay a heavy price in order to enjoy freedom from its cold and deadening influence. On both occasions after their return from London, Gordon and his fellow-deputies received the thanks of the Assembly.

It fell to Gordon at the opening of the Assembly of 1735, to preach the usual sermon. His discourse, which was based on 2 Timothy, ii. 2, was afterwards published, and from it we are able to learn something of his style and teaching. It is evangelical in tone, and suited in its counsels to the needs of the time. In a plain, sensible way he deals with the qualifications and duties of ministers. At the close we can

read between the lines and see a reference to the burning question of the day, in which Gordon asserts the right of Church Courts to refuse admission to the ministry to applicants deemed unsuitable. At the same time, he pleads for the withdrawal of opposition on the part of a congregation to a presentee duly qualified in gifts and graces, simply because they may disapprove of the manner of his election and settlement. " No licentiate or probationer," he says, " ought to be ordained or admitted into the ministry, upon any consideration, unless he be found to be qualified for that office, according to the rule of God's word. Contrary to this rule no minister or society of ministers ought to go, or to concur in or proceed to the ordination of any man who appears not to be qualified for and duly called to the ministry ; nor can any human law or appointment oblige them so to do. They have an unalienable right to exercise their judgment of discretion in this matter ; to follow the light of their own conscience, under the direction of the Spirit and Word of God ; and to decline sinning, although they should be thereby exposed to suffering."

In regard to the duty of congregations in the matter, he gives it as his opinion that the doctrine of that text " speaks home to all congregations concerned in the call or election of ministers, who are obliged in making a choice for themselves, or in consenting to the election and settlement of a minister amongst them, to have a special regard to the ministerial qualifications, faithfulness and ability, prescribed by the apostle in our text. If these are to be seen in the person providentially offered to their choice, they are obliged, in my opinion, to come over many other things relative to his election and settlement that may not be quite agreeable to them."

The evangelical nature of Gordon's own preaching may be understood from a counsel which he gives in the course of the same sermon. " A minister's preaching," he remarks, " upon these other subjects (man's guilt and impotency, his obligation to obedience and morality and the like), should be *finally* and *reductively* (and may very well be) the preaching of *Christ* and *him crucified.* All and every one of those doctrines should point at the Redeemer, lead to him, and terminate in him ; in whom alone guilty and impotent sinners can find righteousness for their justification, grace and strength for their sanctification and performance of gospel-obedience, and

acceptance with God in their moral duties. Therefore in him ought all the lines of our sermons to meet and centre, and him must we preach plainly, carefully and diligently, if we would be found of God faithful ministers."

After his elevation to the Moderator's Chair, Gordon received a call to Alloa. He had by this time been nineteen years in Alford. Thirty years had gone by since his ordination at Premnay. He accepted the call, and was duly admitted to his new charge on the 28th April 1736. Here he continued to labour quietly and faithfully till his death on the 6th August 1749, in the forty-fourth year of his ministry.

Various publications came from his pen in addition to his Assembly sermon. He passed through the press a sermon which he delivered on the occasion of the ordination of Mr William Crookshank. Whilst at Alford, he collaborated with Mr William Robertson, in 1724, in drawing up a *Description of the Garioch*, which has been reprinted both by the Spalding Club and the Scottish History Society. Fifteen parishes are described by the authors, but in the short notice given of each of them there is very little biographical or historical information. The accounts are chiefly topographical.

In the catalogue of the Advocates' Library, an anonymous pamphlet on the great Church question of the day is attributed to Gordon. It is entitled *The State and Duty of the Church of Scotland especially with respect to the Settlement of Ministers, by a minister of that Church*, 1732. In it he advances the following "complex proposition":—"That they of any vacant parish or congregation, who have a divine right to nominate or elect their own pastor, are only the intelligent, religious people of God, that reside in that parish and are of the same profession, principles and communion with the Church whereof that congregation is a part, and with the pastor to whose ministerial care they are to commit themselves." In order to make the influence of the supreme judicature of the Church felt throughout the whole land, he suggests that the Commission "ought to circulate and hold its quarterly meetings in all the great cities and more considerable towns of the nation, as the affairs committed and depending shall happen to require." The pamphlet is written with great force and with full knowledge of ecclesiastical law and procedure.

Gordon married Mary Forbes, daughter of Mr Forbes of Balfling in the parish of Alford. She died in 1728, and was

buried in the Church of Alford. A stone there bears the following quaint inscription :—

> "Within this isle, interred behind these stones,
> Are pious, wise, good Mary Forbes' bones ;
> To Balfling daughter, and of blameless life,
> To Mr Gordon, pastor here, the wife."
>
> Expiravit Apr. 27. A.D. 1728, Aet. suae 46.

This effusion can hardly have come from the pen of her husband.

Gordon's record is a creditable one. His force of character and influence in ecclesiastical affairs gained for him while in the north, the sobriquet of the "Bishop of Alford."

CHAPTER XXIII

ALEXANDER ANDERSON, MODERATOR, 1735

ALEXANDER ANDERSON, in his early days, experienced some of the perils of the great persecution. His father, John Anderson, had been minister of Auchtergaven for five years, when his refusal to obey the orders of the Privy Council made him one of the outed ministers in 1662. He was brave enough to continue to preach and to take some share in field-meetings, but eventually found shelter in Ireland, where he accepted a call to Antrim. Returning to Scotland after the Revolution, the elder Anderson became minister of St Leonard's Church in St Andrews in 1697, holding at the same time the Principalship of the College. Alexander, who was born about 1675, would be with his father in Ireland, where doubtless he received his early education. Thereafter he studied at St Andrews, taking his Master's degree in 1697. After being licensed on the 22nd February 1700, Alexander did not wait long before he received a charge of his own. On the 26th September of the same year, he was ordained to the small parish of Kemback in Fife, from which, however, he was transferred to Falkland on the 13th May 1702. In Falkland he spent the next twenty-three years.

Anderson sprang into prominence through the antagonism which he showed towards Ebenezer Erskine. For a time the two ministers were on very intimate terms, but the Marrow controversy and all that led up to it, separated even chief friends, and Anderson manifested during it a spirit of great personal spite against Erskine. The minister of Portmoak deeply lamented this hostility, and tried to turn it aside by a soft answer. All the particulars are not known, but as far as we can judge, Anderson did not come very creditably out of the conflict.

The difference of opinion arose first of all out of their attitude towards the Oath of Abjuration. Anderson had agreed to the Oath, but Erskine refused to take it. On the Monday, after a communion at Dysart, in October 1714, the

two ministers were engaged to preach. Erskine, rightly or wrongly, when preaching in the morning, from John vi. 66, spoke of defection from Christ, and referring to some who had subscribed the Oath, charged them with "a design to serve the Pretender's cause." Anderson preached in the afternoon from Colossians, ii. 6. He stated that "walking in Christ implied walking in love towards each other. All divisions about lesser matters," he said, "where it is hard to tell who is in the right and who is in the wrong, are to be avoided, and I entreat you to guard against all insinuations that have a tendency to alienate you from those ministers whom you reproach as guilty of defection" (Fraser's *Erskine*, p. 225). An altercation of this character in connection with the celebration of the Lord's Supper shows how high feeling was running at the time. Erskine writing from Portmoak on the 20th July 1715, to Anderson, asked him to help him at his August communion, and expressed the hope that any misunderstanding between them might be for ever buried. "It is uneasy for me," he said, "to think there should be any misunderstanding betwixt me and a person whom I so much love and value; and therefore, dear brother, let all unhappy differences be buried for ever in silence, and let us in time coming construe favourably one another's words and actions as becomes brethren—which I hope we are in more respects than one. For my own part, whatever harsh thoughts you may have of me, I can freely declare with the utmost sincerity, that (though indeed of small value, yet such as they are), you have my cordial sympathy in your late affliction, and prayers for the Lord's countenance on your labours, and particularly on the great work you have in hand, and I hope I shall on all occasions show myself, Rev. and Dear Sir, your very affectionate Brother and Servant, Ebenezer Erskine."

Anderson, who was evidently bent on preserving the cause of quarrel, refused the kindly invitation his friend had given him. Even the touching reference to Anderson's domestic sorrow, of which we have no particulars, failed to move his heart. Ten years later the personal bitterness he bore to Erskine came out in an extremely petty way. Erskine was under call to Kirkcaldy. The case came before the Commission, when Anderson, who by this time was in St Andrews, made a virulent attack on Erskine in his absence, and referred to sermons which he had heard Erskine preach years before. He even brought it as a reason against Erskine's translation,

that at his ordination in Portmoak he had not signed the Confession of Faith. This, indeed, was perfectly true, but Anderson failed to state the cause of this omission. The fault lay entirely with the Presbytery who conducted their business so carelessly, that not only Erskine but several other ministers within their bounds had been ordained without having signed the prescribed formula. Erskine, doubtless, should have brought the matter up afterwards, but it seems it passed quite out of his mind. In the end, the call to Kirkcaldy was set aside, and Anderson had the poor satisfaction of knowing that he had been successful in preventing the promotion in the Church of his former friend.

The crisis in their relation to each other was reached when Erskine became the exponent of the Marrow doctrine and the leader of the evangelical party in the Church. It is only with Anderson's part in the matter with which we have to do. It was in May 1725, that he came forward as the prosecutor of Erskine before the Commission of the General Assembly. In stating the grievance which had entered his soul on the Monday of the Dysart communion, he affirmed that "Mr Erskine had preached doctrine of such turbulent and erroneous tendency, as Mr Anderson preaching after him, was obliged publicly to contradict" (*Gospel Truth*, p. 106). Such a charge could not be left unanswered. Erskine published the sermon, and in issuing it from the press quietly stated the pleasing fact, that the action of Mr Anderson had really turned out for the furtherance of the Gospel, inasmuch as it forced him to overcome "a culpable obstinacy in himself which had kept him from publishing sermons ; now he did so in self-defence." Here is Erskine's account of the incident. "In May, 1725, Mr A. A., a reverend brother, with whom I have taken sweet counsel together, and gone to the house of God in company, and whose name if it were practicable, out of tenderness to him, I have all inclination in the world to conceal, was pleased in my absence, and without any provocation from me that I know of, publicly to arraign me before the Commission of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. I took occasion to talk with that brother in the beginning of July, 1725, about his conduct, but do not think it so agreeable to the character of a minister or gentleman to propal in print, what passes in private conversation . . . Although he did me much evil, yet God forbid that I should render evil for evil. If what I have said (in a considerably

large defence) shall satisfy my brother, and reconcile his heart to me, I shall heartily rejoice, and not only forgive him, but embrace him in the arms of my warmest affection" (*ibid.* p. 109). Fraser, in his *Life of Erskine*, puts the burden of the Assembly's harsh treatment of the minister of Portmoak equally on the shoulders of Anderson and Principal Hadow. "Owing, chiefly," he says, "to the vehemence of Mr Alexander Anderson and Principal Hadow of St Andrews, whom Mr Boston designates, 'the spring of that black act of Assembly,' the five representing brethren belonging to the Synod of Fife were treated with peculiar severity" (p. 371). The leading part played by Anderson in opposing Ebenezer Erskine, is further proved by a pamphlet, written in the form of a letter, in support of the Marrow doctrine in 1726. The letter is addressed to "The Rev. Mr A.," who has been identified with the subject of this notice. It is entitled—*The Viper shaken off without hurt into the fire; being a short Answer to a pamphlet lately published, intituled Marrow Chicaning Displayed,* [*by the Rev. James Adams, minister at Kinnaird,*] *in a letter to the Rev. Mr A*[*nderson,*] *minister of the Gospel at* [*St Andrews.*] (Low's *Boston*, p. 363).

Of the work of Anderson in his quiet, historic parish of Falkland, no public record remains. There is one experience which came to him, however, during his controversy with Erskine, in which he was subjected to a good deal of trouble, if not of danger as well. It was in connection with the Rebellion of 1715. The *News Letters* of that date, edited by Mr A. Francis Steuart, tell us that "the Rebells have seven garrisons and about 1800 men [in Fife]. In it the most considerable are Couper, St Andrews, Falkland, etc." The date of this letter is the 25th January 1716. Rae, in his *History of the Rebellion*, likewise informs us that the Jacobite troops "vented their malice against the Presbyterian ministers in those parts, plundering and spoiling the houses of some, taking others into custody and making them prisoners, and requiring them all that they neither preach nor pray against them and their pretended king, nor yet for our lawful sovereign, King George, whom they stiled the Elector of Brunswick. The ministers refused to obey these orders, and therefore were treated as enemies" (p. 236). In such a state of affairs, Anderson thought it good to leave Falkland. Accordingly he took refuge in Edinburgh, but after a time returned to his manse, which he reached on the 23rd December. Having

reason to believe, the historian records, that the rebels "had a design against him, as well as against his companion, [Mr John Marshall, writer in Edinburgh, a native of Falkland, then on a visit to his dying father,] he put on his clothes very quickly and made his escape ; but indeed he escaped them so narrowly that as he got out at one door, they entered by the other, and missing him searched all his office-houses for him. Not finding him there, they threatened to plunder his house, but for a small piece of money forbore it, taking only some few things of little value, and the minister's horse, which his servant rescued from them afterwards" (p. 340).

The disturbed character of this portion of Fife at the time is further borne out by Wodrow, who has preserved a letter written from Leslie bearing on the situation. The writer of the letter and the recipient, who was living at Hamilton, were brothers named Archer. "Upon the 4th inst. [January, 1716], Rob Roy with one hundred and fifty men, came to Falkland, and took possession of the Palace for a garrison, from which they came through the country-side, and rob and plunder, taking clothes and victuals, and everything that makes for them, none to oppose them till this day eight days." A month later he writes :—"To let you see how uneasy this country has been under these rebels, I shall give you but one instance. Those in Falkland continued there about a month, and for ordinary they were but about one hundred and fifty at most. In that time they eat and destroyed 3000 sheep in Falkland and the adjacent parishes next to it" (*Corr.* ii. 115). Evidently Anderson's parish was no place of safety during Rob Roy's stay in it. He showed no little courage in coming back to it from Edinburgh before the danger was over.

The vigour of his opposition to Erskine, though it is not possible to approve of the animus he showed towards him, reveals Anderson as a man of vast energy, and doubtless his pulpit ministrations were characterized by great zeal. In 1725 a call came to him from St Andrews. The case went before the Commission of Assembly, but the measure Anderson meted out to Erskine was not measured out to him again. The Presbytery had declined to translate Anderson from Falkland. An appeal was taken against this decision. Wodrow thus refers to the matter as it came up before the Commission in March 1725 :—"Mr Alexander Anderson's transportation from Falkland to St Andrews took up some time and was carried pretty unanimously. Mr Anderson

seemed not much against it, but left himself to the judgment of brethren" (*Ana.* iii. 186). The claims of the University town were regarded as paramount, and Anderson was settled in his new charge on the 14th April. He remained in it till his death.

In the Simson case, Anderson took a considerable interest, and frequently spoke in connection with it on the floor of the Assembly. He took up a strong position of antagonism to the Glasgow Professor, which might almost have won the admiration of his old friend Erskine. Here is the brief *résumé* of one of his speeches as given by Wodrow in a letter dated May 9th, 1729 :—" Then Mr Alexander Anderson spoke, and was for going on to a further sentence, but did not come to particulars. He urged the words of the last Act of Assembly, which declared several things remaining, and that what Mr Simson and his advocate had spoken from the bar, was so far from removing the grounds for favour, that they have increased. He alleged that Mr Simson continued to impugn what the last Assembly had found relevant and proven ; and that he had declared he never was of different sentiments from this Church ; that he had no way changed his sentiments but was still of the same mind with this Church. He alleged this weakened terribly all his declarations and renunciations " (*Corr.* iii. 423). Other references to Anderson's attitude towards Simson's views show how pronouncedly orthodox he was on the great doctrine of the Deity of the Lord Jesus.

About the same time, Anderson found fresh occasion to show his inveterate antipathy to the Marrow Men. A vacancy had occurred at Kinross, in the Synod of Fife. A call was presented to a probationer named Craig, who was likewise the nominee of the patron. The rumour had spread that Craig as a student had been in close association with Erskine and his friends, and was in sympathy with their views of the gospel. Anderson did all in his power to stop the appointment. Circumstances favoured him. The patron died. His brother, who succeeded to the estate, refused to implement the deed of presentation, even though the people were " knit " to the preacher of their choice. The matter came up before the Synod, at which Anderson was instrumental in getting a series of twenty questions drawn up to be answered by Craig. In the last question it was proposed to ask the probationer if he approved of the Act of the Assembly of 1720 against the Marrow Men. Craig pled the unfairness of the proceedings.

Why should he be asked to express an opinion on the action of the Supreme Court of the Church? He could not, however, escape the net spread for him, and courageously replied that he was in agreement with the Representers. In the end Anderson gained his point, and Craig lost his presentation to Kinross.

Anderson's interest in the public business of the Church, whether we agree with his opinions or not, marks him out as one of the most capable leaders of the day. His brethren so believed in him, that he was called to occupy the Chair of the Assembly in 1735. By this time, the faithful, gossiping historian of Eastwood had passed away, and we miss the details of this and other Assemblies, which would have made the figure of the Moderator stand out clearly before us even after the lapse of nearly two centuries. It is a pity that no one followed Wodrow's example, and wrote out day by day the sayings and doings of fathers and brethren. If any one did so, the correspondence has not reached us.

The Assembly of 1735 was composed, to a large extent, of ministers and elders who in their heart regretted the judgment pronounced upon Ebenezer Erskine and his friends. Accordingly, there was among the members a good deal of sympathy with evangelical doctrine; and at the same time there existed among them a desire to countenance the right of congregations to choose their own ministers. A deputation was appointed to proceed to London to press for the repeal of the Patronage Act. The repeated attempts made by the Church to get rid of this Act of Queen Anne, should be borne in mind by the student of this period of ecclesiastical history. Such attempts clearly indicate that up to this time, at least, the general feeling of the Church was opposed to the continuance of the legal rights of patrons. Of the deputation now appointed, Anderson was a member. There were associated with him James Gordon of Alford, the late Moderator, and John Erskine of Carnock, one of the most trusted elders in the Church. The deputies were so far successful in their efforts, that leave was given in Parliament to bring in a bill abolishing Patronage. Such a bill, too, was actually drawn up by Forbes of Culloden, but the Legislature was apathetic and nothing came of it.

This Assembly of 1735, likewise, took an important step in relation to those "Riding Committees," whose work had proved so disastrous to the well-being of the Scottish Church. The Commission of Assembly was prohibited from appointing

such Committees for the purpose of intruding on congregations ministers whom Presbyteries and Synods refused to induct. This was a great gain. At the same time, the Assembly, considering the complaints which had become general regarding the style of preaching common among the younger ministers, who put into their sermons " little that might not have been found in Seneca and Plato," asked Presbyteries to approve of an overture, calling upon all ministers to give in their sermons a full and clear declaration of the essential doctrines of the gospel of the grace of God. The very passing of such a resolution was hopeful, and showed that at the time the Church was in some real degree alive to the weakness within its borders. It is an indication, too, of the change which had come over the preaching of the Church since the years that followed the Revolution.

Though Anderson lived for two years after his Moderatorship, for some reason he failed to sign the minutes of Assembly. The fact of this omission was brought up at the Assembly of 1744, when the Moderator of the day was appointed to attest them. The minutes of 1736, likewise, which Mr Lauchlan M'Intosh had left unsigned, were dealt with in the same way.

Little is known of Anderson's private life. He married a daughter of Francis Hay of Strowie, and had one son, James, an advocate, and one daughter, Margaret, who became the wife of Mr Laurence Watson, one of the ministers of St Andrews. Anderson died on the 9th November 1737, in the thirty-eighth year of his ministry.

CHAPTER XXIV

LAUCHLAN M'INTOSH, MODERATOR, 1736

LAUCHLAN M'INTOSH sprang from the M'Intoshes of Dalmunzie and Dalreoch in the county of Perth. The possession of these estates to which he succeeded, shows him to have been in the enjoyment of considerable wealth. Lauchlan took his Master's degree at St Andrews in 1710. On the 16th March 1714, he received license from the Presbytery of Dunkeld, and two years later, on the 3rd October, he was ordained to the ministry at Dunning. The appointment was made by the Presbytery, *jure devoluto*, but a call was likewise presented to him by the congregation to whom Mr M'Intosh had preached on several occasions. The settlement, however, did not take place until the Presbytery had consulted "my Lady Rollo, younger, in order to know her mind." As she and the heritors expressed satisfaction with the presentee, the ordination was effected.

In the preceding year, the village of Dunning had suffered severely at the hands of the Jacobites. The minister, William Reid, an old man, was a great loyalist. When the Rebellion was at its height, and at the very time when the troops of the Earl of Mar were in the district, Reid with remarkable courage preached one day in Auchterarder, with a pistol hanging at his breast. This so enraged the rebels that they threatened to burn the village of Dunning to the ground. Before they arrived, Reid, who was in ill health, died. They carried out their threat, however, and only one house escaped destruction. M'Intosh, accordingly, came to the parish during a time of great distress. He himself had no manse.

His first work, doubtless, was to help the people; for nearly two years elapsed before he made arrangements for a house for himself. The bargain he concluded with the heritors does not seem to have been a burdensome one for them. It was agreed that they should give him 950 merks Scots, while he "performed all the carriages." At the same time he undertook to build the manse and offices, and have them

declared free of debt within a year This he was enabled to do on the 21st July 1719. In all probability, M'Intosh had to go pretty deeply into his own pocket. It may be he was a heritor in the parish himself, for we read of a farm of Dalreoch within the bounds of Dunning.

It is interesting to note that the sufferings of the people in this district on account of the Rebellion, drew forth a certain amount of practical sympathy from outside quarters. The Session Records of Dunning under date 2nd October 1716, the day before M'Intosh's ordination, contain the following entry :—" Transmitted to the Session of Dunning from Mr William Mitchell, minister at Edinburgh, and Mr William Hamilton, Professor of Divinity there, £18 sterling, as part of a donation of a charitable person for the relief of such as being well-affected to the present government, were brought to straits in the late Rebellion " (Wilson's *Dunning*).

For nine years M'Intosh laboured in this Perthshire parish, till in 1725 he was translated to Errol in the Carse of Gowrie. This charge had been vacant for a lengthened period. Already, in 1722, he had received an unanimous call to Errol, but the Presbytery refused to let him go. Two years afterwards the Presbytery of Perth, *jure devoluto*, with consent of the heritors and elders, presented him to the parish. On this occasion he was allowed to accept the call. The long continued vacancy in Errol thus came to an end, by the settlement of M'Intosh as its minister, on the 17th February 1725. Here he remained till his death.

Almost the only matter to be recorded in connection with M'Intosh's ministry at Errol, is with regard to the Lord's Supper. Owing to the long vacancy, the observance of the Communion had been allowed to fall into abeyance. The Session Minutes describe with care how M'Intosh resumed the celebration of this " gospel festival " in 1728. Even this was three years after he had come (Philip's *Ancestry of Archbishop Davidson*, p. 7).

M'Intosh was decidedly Evangelical in his sympathies, and took up a very friendly attitude towards the Seceders after the Assembly issued its decree against them. At an earlier period, while still a probationer, he had come into close touch with James Fisher, who became one of the Secession leaders. Proof of his friendship with him is given in this way. Fisher's father was minister of Rhynd parish, within which M'Intosh's estate of Dalmunzie was situated.

To Rhynd, the well-known Separatist preacher, John Adamson, came in 1715. Apparently with the consent of the elder Fisher, he preached in the parish church. Adamson printed his sermon with two prefatory notes. It is entitled—*An alarming Sound to Sinful Sleepers, being a Sermon preached in the paroch of Rhynd, at the time of general apostacy from God*, Hebrews xii., 12, 13. One of the prefatory notes is addressed to " Thomas Fisher, minister of Rhind, once to me as a father," and the other to " David Moncrieff of Easter Rhind and his lady, and Lachlan M'Intosh, who heard and approved of the sermon when preached." This is specially of interest to us, because it shows the intimacy which existed between M'Intosh and the Fisher family, and prepares us for the friendly part which the minister of Errol played towards James Fisher, whom in Rhynd parish he knew as a boy. It was not, however, mere interest in the son of his old minister that urged M'Intosh to support him and his companions. He had at the same time a very real sympathy with the doctrines for which the Seceders contended, and was one of fourteen members who protested against Erskine being rebuked for his Synod sermon.

" About this time," says William Wilson in his *Diary*—the date is the end of 1731—" a few ministers met together to consider what might be proper to them to do in the present juncture. Those who first met were Mr Gillespie at Strathmiglo, Mr Laing at Newburgh, Mr Lauchlan M'Intosh at Errol, Mr Fisher at Kinclaven and Mr Moncrieff at Abernethy. I was with them at all their meetings " (Ferrier's *Wilson*, p. 176). In February of the following year, a Representation was drawn up at Perth to be laid on the table of the Assembly, in connection with the case of the Four Brethren. The Assembly refused to receive this Representation, which was subscribed by forty-two ministers and three elders. M'Intosh was one of the signatories.

A case which arose within the boundaries of the Presbytery of Perth, afforded M'Intosh the opportunity of supporting the claim of Church members to have a voice in the settlement of their ministers. In 1732 Kinfauns was vacant. The majority of the Presbytery resolved to ordain to the charge a probationer, Charles Fut by name, who was not acceptable to the people. They carried their point, but M'Intosh associated himself with Wilson and others, and entered his dissent from the finding of the court.

In 1734, M'Intosh had to do with a later phase of the Erskine case, when a special remit regarding it was sent down from the Assembly to the Synod of Perth and Stirling. The Synod was authorized to deal with the Four Brethren in such a way as to retain them in the Church if at all possible. An express direction, however, was given to the Synod, forbidding that Court to take upon itself "to judge of the legality or formality of the former proceedings of the Church Judicatories in relation to this affair, or either to approve of or censure the same; *i.e.* ordained them to reverse the decision that the Commission had come to under the orders of the Assembly itself" (Ferrier's *Wilson*, p. 273). The reason of this step was, as Struthers tells us in his *History*, that "there were a few men, such as Willison, Currie [of Kinglassie], M'Intosh, etc., still adhering to them, whom they wished to secure, and they secured them by an act more absurd than any of those which had immediately occasioned the Secession" (ii. 8). Availing themselves of this power, the Synod recalled the judgment pronounced by the Commission, and deputed M'Intosh to inform Erskine and his friends of their finding. His acceptance of this task clearly proved his unwillingness to go any farther with the Seceding Brethren. From this point, therefore, his association with them practically ceased. In his own parish, his altered attitude towards them caused a good deal of heart burning; for many of his people inspired by his teaching and sympathy, sided with Erskine. For a time they continued within the Established Church in Errol, because in some things they were in true agreement with their minister, and were highly pleased with his opposition to patronage and to any curtailment of the rights of the people. But when in 1737 M'Intosh read the Porteous Act from the pulpit, they could brook his ministry no longer, and showed the strength of their convictions by joining Wilson's congregation in Perth (Philip's *Evangel in Gowrie*, p. 210).

In the Simson case he took up an attitude of strong antagonism to the views of the Glasgow Professor, and advocated his deposition. Mr M'Intosh, we are told, said "if the sentence were only suspension, he was afraid in the eyes of other Churches the conclusion would be unequal to the crime of impugning fundamental truths, shaking and undermining them, and other gross things there, which could not well answer so mild a censure as suspension, and would not satisfy brethren, nor the offended people of God nor other Churches" (Wodrow, *Corr.* iii. 391).

Though almost nothing is known of M'Intosh's pulpit work, he was regarded as a man of ability and influence in the Church. In 1734 he was chosen, along with Willison of Dundee and Gordon of Alford, to go to London to make application to Parliament for the repeal of the Act of Queen Anne restoring patronage. Willison we know to have been a strong opponent of the method of settling ministers introduced again into the Church in 1712. Gordon, too, was a vigorous upholder of the people's rights. M'Intosh must have entertained views on the matter equally pronounced, when he was asked to accompany these deputies to London. It happened that the Assembly of 1734 was composed largely of ministers and elders, who looked unfavourably upon the system of patronage. Accordingly, the party of freedom, for the first time for many years, found themselves in a majority, and through their Commission sent this deputation to Parliament. The appeal, it need hardly be stated, failed, but Mr M'Intosh and his coadjutors received the thanks of the next Assembly for their labour. The effort of the majority in the Supreme Court at this time may be regarded as proof of the sincerity of the wish of many in the Church to retain the Seceders within their communion. The abolition of patronage would have been a great step in this direction.

A still higher honour awaited the minister of Errol. In 1736, he was raised to the Moderator's Chair. His term of office was noteworthy in several respects. The address for the repeal of the Patronage Act was engrossed in the records of the Assembly. There was also passed an Act concerning preaching, which cannot be read without the highest approval. By its spirit and substance, it testifies to the existence of a real love for evangelical doctrine prevailing in many quarters in Scotland. The Act shows this so clearly that its relevant portions may be quoted in full. "It is recommended to all who preach the gospel, when they handle the doctrine of God's redeeming love and of His free grace in the justification of sinners, the blessings of the Redeemer's purchase, and the privileges of the new covenant, to study so to manage these subjects as to lead their hearers into an abhorrence of sin, the love of God and of our neighbour, and the practice of universal holiness, seeing that it is one great end of the gospel to destroy the works of the Devil, and to teach men to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world . . . And in order thereto, it is necessary to show men the corruption and depravity of human nature by their fall in Adam, their

natural impotence for and aversion to what is spiritually good, and lead them to the true and only source of all grace and holiness, viz., union with Christ, by the Holy Spirit's working faith in us and renewing us more and more after the image of God ; and to let their hearers know that they must first be grafted into Christ as their root, before their fruit can be savoury unto God." Whoever drew up this Act knew what the Gospel was, and how it should be preached. It is almost startling to find such a manifesto coming from the Church which condemned the Marrow and threw out the Seceders.

Even more was done under the leadership of M'Intosh to draw back Erskine and his friends within the pale of the Church. Ere the Assembly closed an Act was passed "against Intrusion of Ministers into Vacant Congregations." It set forth that "The General Assembly, considering that it is and has been since the Reformation, the principle of this Church that no minister shall be intruded into any church contrary to the will of the congregation, do therefore seriously recommend to all judicatories of this Church, to have a due regard to this principle in planting vacant congregations, so as none be intruded into such parishes, as they regard the glory of God and edification of the body of Christ." Such a finding must be accepted as the sincere expression of the views of the majority in the Assembly of 1736. Of that there can be no question. But at the same time, the party whom we now call the Moderate party, could not and did not approve of this resolution. By and by, they were able to assert their own opinions and bear down all opposition. Their presence and strength, however, in the Assembly which passed this Act, made the Seceding Brethren so cautious that they refused to grasp the hand of reconciliation held out to them. Doubtless it was well. The breach would only have been delayed till the days of Principal Robertson.

Another matter discussed in this Assembly kept alive the suspicion of Erskine and his supporters. This was the case of Professor Campbell of St Andrews, who had been charged with giving expression in his lectures to questionable views on certain doctrines. Into the merits of the case there is no need to enter. It is sufficient to say that the Assembly, after hearing Campbell's explanations of his statements, accepted them as satisfactory, though counselling him at the same time to be more cautious in future. This finding only deepened the conviction in the minds of the Seceders, that return to

the fold of the Established Church was at once unwise and impossible for them.

In 1743 M'Intosh was urged by his friends to allow himself to be nominated again for the Moderator's Chair, but he declined to be put forward. While attending the meetings of this Assembly, he caught infection from an epidemic which was raging in Edinburgh at the time. From the effects of his illness he never recovered. He died on the 13th May 1744, in the twenty-eighth year of his ministry.

M'Intosh was twice married, first to Margaret, daughter of John Murray, minister of Trinity Gask, by whom he had two sons and five daughters, and then to Margaret Anderson, the widow of Laurence Watson, minister of St Andrews, and daughter of Alexander Anderson, who occupied the Moderator's Chair in 1735. If M'Intosh's second marriage took place before 1736, the interesting fact appears that he was welcomed to the Chair of the Assembly by his father-in-law. Probably this is a unique episode in the annals of the Church. Mrs M'Intosh survived her husband till 1770, when she died at St Andrews.

One son, Robert, occupied an important position in connection with the York Building Company, which took over from the Government a large number of the Scottish estates forfeited after the Rebellion of 1715. Ramsay of Ochtertyre says that Robert M'Intosh, who was alive at the time he wrote, was "one of those extraordinary characters in the land that occur but once or twice in an age, without benefiting themselves or society." By profession he was an advocate, in which capacity he attended the law courts in Edinburgh, though afterwards he proceeded to London. When his connection with the York Building Company, which was so unfortunate an undertaking, came to an end, he retired to Edinburgh, making his home "in Argyll Square," which Ramsay tells us, "he seldom or never quits. There he sits in his bed-room which is filled with law papers, having seldom any clothes on him but his breeches and nightgown. And as the great arm-chair in which he sits is within five feet of his bed, his perambulations are confined to a very narrow space. His meals are only taken when he feels hungry, so that he may be seen sometimes breakfasting on tea at three in the afternoon" (*Scotland and Scotsmen*, i. 415). A sad picture, truly, which if he had seen it, would have grieved the heart of the worthy minister of Errol!

CHAPTER XXV

JAMES RAMSAY, MODERATOR, 1738 AND 1741

James Ramsay was Moderator of the Assembly on two occasions. The earliest reference we have to him is during his student days in St Andrews. It is to be regretted that no information seems to be available about the youthful experiences of one, who during a long life of great activity, was closely associated with stirring events in Church and State. Of his parentage nothing has been discovered. Scott mentions that he died in 1749, in the eighty-third year of his age. Accordingly he must have been born in 1667, the year after Pentland's fatal fight. Tait in his *Two Centuries of Border Church Life*, puts his birth two years later. Ramsay duly entered upon his course of training for the ministry, and obtained from St Andrews University the degree of M.A. in 1687. His lot was thus thrown in happy times. The days of oppression were about to cease, and Presbytery once more was to be in the ascendant in the Scottish Church. As he received license from the Presbytery of Duns and Chirnside, on the 1st November 1692, it is probable that he belonged to that district. His period of probation was not lengthy. On the 7th March in the following year, he was called to Eyemouth. On the 9th May he was ordained among the fisher folk of the Berwickshire coast, and here he remained for fourteen years. Of his Eyemouth ministry no record remains, but as a member of the Presbytery of Duns and Chirnside, he came into touch with Thomas Boston, then a young student, in whom he took a warm interest, and who, though he differed from him strongly on certain points, always maintained for him a deep regard. Boston thus writes in 1694, when he had just begun the study of theology:—"Mr James Ramsay, minister then at Eyemouth, now at Kelso, having put the book in my hand, viz., Pareus on Ursin's *Catechism*, the which I read over three or four times, ere I went to the school of divinity." By and by, when Boston was settled at Simprin, he became a co-presbyter of

the minister of Eyemouth. Discussions which took place from time to time in the Presbytery, revealed a growing divergence in view between the two friends—a divergence which gradually widened, until Boston became the typical representative of the Marrow School of Theology, and Ramsay stood forth as the unbending supporter of Moderatism. In 1704 a discussion in the Presbytery, occasioned by the discourse of a student, on the question *An fœdus gratiæ sit conditionatum*? (whether the Covenant of grace is conditional), illustrates the theological standpoint of the two men. The student "in his exegesis," says Boston, "resolved in the affirmative, though, I think, he held by faith only as the condition. I impugned his thesis, using this argument, viz., 'I will be their God and they shall be my people' is not conditional but absolute. But this is the covenant, *ergo*, the covenant is not conditional. To which Mr Ramsay answered for the young man, that the Covenant of grace was indeed a testament, and not properly speaking, conditional. Herewith I was satisfied; but withal I thought it a pity that such an improper way of speaking of faith should be used, since it was not scriptural, was liable to be abused, and ready to lead people into mistakes." "I conversed occasionally," continues the minister of Simprin "on some of these points [of the Marrow doctrine] with brethren, particularly with Mr Ramsay; and indeed he was still on the other side of the question. We had then some of the same arguments that afterwards, in the year 1723, were cast up before the Synod in Mr Wilson's affair; but this dispute marred not our friendship, he being still pleased to call me to assist him at a communion at Eyemouth, though he used not to be with me at Simprin on that occasion." In proof of this it may be noted that the *Smith MSS.* tell us that Boston was present at the communion in Eyemouth in March 1702, in July of the same year, and again in July 1703 (Low's *Account of my Life*, p. 154). The frequency with which Boston went to the help of Ramsay is a clear indication of their friendship.

A short time before, Ramsay had given another proof of his appreciation of Boston's powers by endeavouring to secure Boston's appointment as Synod clerk. This was brought about in 1701. Boston does not fail to note in his *Memoirs* the kindly act of Ramsay, when he stood up to read the Synod minutes for the first time. "Being in great confusion," he says, "through my natural diffidence and timorousness, I

blundered, but recovering myself, with much ado made it out. Upon which occasion Mr Ramsay did seasonably express his confidence in me notwithstanding." All these references incline us to think well of the minister of Eyemouth. His interest in Boston and his frequent intercourse with him indicate a sympathetic attitude towards evangelism, which, alas, was not retained in later years.

An incident which took place in the Presbytery of Chirnside in 1700 reveals the interest which Ramsay was beginning to take in the general work of the Church. Again Boston and he were comrades in the scene. "I had observed," says Boston, "that the formula we of that Presbytery had to subscribe was a very unfit one, being that which was calculated by the Assembly for those of the Episcopal way who were to be received into ministerial communion. This was seconded by Mr James Ramsay, who further proposed that there should be a new formula made. And indeed, in presbyterial management of matters of the greatest weight, Mr Ramsay and I seldom differed in those days; but at this diet, the motion was so opposed by some, that nothing was concluded." It is evident the two friends had hit upon a grievance which required to be put right. But it was not till 1711 that the Assembly introduced a new formula for subscription by probationers.

On the 5th September 1706, Ramsay was presented with a call to Kelso, which he accepted, but he was only inducted to his new charge on the 24th September 1707. The settlement was by no means harmonious, and this perhaps explains the long delay in his translation. In course of time, the opposition to Ramsay passed away, and during his long pastorate in Kelso he enjoyed great popularity. Sometimes a little pawkiness helped him to smooth difficulties out of his way. A leading elder of the Church, for example, refused to welcome Ramsay as his minister, and showed his dissatisfaction by non-attendance at public worship. Ramsay called on him professedly to ask advice about a money investment, and got him to take the money for his own business. Then he expressed regret at the elder's absence from Church, and the hope that he would be in his place next Sabbath, "seeing he had such influence." Needless to say he gained his purpose. This procedure, however, would not do in every case, but Ramsay doubtless knew his man.

The Session Records of Kelso are full of cases of discipline. Sabbath breaking is noted as specially prevalent. The

following minute occurs in 1710. "As many people in this place are guilty of profaning the Sabbath by walking abroad in the fields after sermons," the minister was recommended by the Session "to give them a general reproof out of the pulpit, and to dehort them from so doing in time coming, with certification that the Session will take strict notice of anyone guiltie of it." The minister faithfully implemented the decree of the Session. In our criticism of such an act, we must not forget that the elders, who so strongly expressed themselves in regard to the observance of the Sabbath, were the representatives of the Church members who elected them to office. It is customary in some quarters to speak of the priestly powers possessed by the ministers of the eighteenth century, and the high-handed way in which they governed the Church. But much of this censure is beside the mark. Those who indulge in it altogether forget the democratic character of the Presbyterian Church. Without the consent of his elders, no minister could have forced his own special views upon his congregation. Public opinion even then knew how to assert itself.

Ramsay was in favour of Carstares' policy with regard to the Oath of Abjuration. A debate arose on the subject in the Synod. Boston, whose "heart loathed the Oath," was made to stumble a little at Ramsay's answer to his objection. Boston held that the "declared intent of the Oath [was] to preserve the Act inviolable on which the security of the Church of England depends." Ramsay, to Boston's manifest astonishment, drew a distinction "between the Church of England as a Protestant Church, and as a Church having such a government and worship, admitting the intent of the Oath in the first sense but not in the second." This certainly was an ingenious interpretation of the Oath, and it commended itself to the majority of the Synod.

Ramsay's first work of a public character in the name of the Church was given to him in 1714. George I. had succeeded to the throne. It behoved the Church of Scotland to testify its loyalty through a deputation of its leading men. Five were chosen. One of them was Ramsay, the other four were Carstares, Mitchell, Hart of Edinburgh and Lining of Lesmahagow. Their reception by the king in London and their doings on the journey have been noted in the biography of Mitchell, but there may be inserted here the account given by Hart of the way in which one of the Sabbaths during the

journey was spent by three of the deputation. Reaching Barnby Moor on a Saturday night, and finding there was no place of public worship which they were " clear " to attend within a reasonable distance, " we resolved," says Hart, " to spend the Lord's day as well as we could. So each having retired alone for some time in the morning, we breakfasted about ten of the clock, and after that Messrs Lining, Ramsay, Adams (Mr Lining's man), and I did shut our chamber door and went about worship. I read, sang and prayed, and then we retired again to our several chambers and met about two of the clock, and Mr Ramsay read, sang and prayed, and after that we retired to our several chambers and met between four and five, supped, and after supper, Mr Lining read, sang and prayed, and after we had sat awhile we retired and so prepared for bed. Thus we spent the day at Barnby Moor."

The five delegates do not appear to have been of one mind. In a letter from Mr John Williamson of Inveresk to Wodrow, dated the 24th September 1714, regarding this deputation to London, it is said :—" I find Mr Ramsay much weighted with this Commission. I understand the jurant members are not desirous of being hampered with instructions. Whence it flows I cannot well tell, but some who it seems favour the jurants, have made a satyrical verse on this Commission—

> " To save the Church from being tools,
> They've sent three wise men and two fools."

Hart and Lining were the Non-jurants of the party (Hart's *Journal*, p. x.).

Williamson states in a later letter that " great differences had fallen out among [the deputies] about some things." This is extremely likely when we remember that Lining, the representative of the old Covenanters, was in the party.

The fact that Ramsay was chosen to join this honourable mission, testifies to the prominent place he had now reached in the councils and work of the Church. It is interesting to observe, however, at the same time, that loyal subject though Ramsay was, he did not approve of the union of the countries, and strongly objected to prelates having seats in the united Parliament (Low's *Boston's Gen. Account*. p. 19).

In the following year, Ramsay was called upon to show his loyalty in a more practical way. It was the year of the first Jacobite rebellion. The installation of a member of the House of Hanover on the British throne was looked upon by

the Stewart party as a suitable occasion on which to attempt to win the Crown for the Pretender. A portion of the insurgent army made its way, in the autumn of 1715, to the Border district and took possession of Kelso. A meeting was held in the church on the 8th August, in order to make preparations for defending the town. Reinforcements for the Pretender arrived, and the loyal defenders withdrew. Ramsay, who was taking an active part in the proceedings, left with them. "The next day was Sunday, and the Episcopal service was performed in the great kirk of Kelso, and not in the Episcopal meeting-house." The clergyman was Robert Patten, who "holds a distinguished place in the annals of infamy." He chose a significant and, from his point of view, an appropriate text, Deut. xxi. 17. "The right of the first-born is his." Probably the good people of Kelso and their minister had to yield to superior force, when they handed the keys of the church to the opposing party, for we cannot make any mistake as to the side on which their sympathies lay. "Encouraged," we are told, "by their minister, Mr Ramsay, Sir William Bennet of Grubbet, and Sir John Pringle of Stichel, the inhabitants subscribed an association, binding and obliging themselves by the blessing of God, to assist and stand by one another in defence of their lawful sovereign, King George, the successor of the Crown, happily established by law, and the Protestant religion in opposition to a Popish pretender and all his abettors" (Struthers' *Hist. of Scot.* i. 292. *Hill Burton*, viii. 296).

There were at the time a few adherents of the Jacobite policy in Kelso. Probably they would have a mixed treatment measured out to them by their fellow-townsmen after the Highlanders left on the 27th October. Some of the insurgents, too, deserted their colours, and remained in the neighbourhood. Regarding one of them a story is told which shows Ramsay to have been plain-spoken in the pulpit. This renegade Highlander had secured the post of exciseman. On a certain occasion, he was in the gallery of the church during public worship, when he began to write probably some business notes. Seeing him do this, Ramsay cried out:—"My brethren, except ye be born again, it is as impossible for you to enter the kingdom of heaven, as it is for a Highlander not to be a thief. Man with the keelovine, do you hear that? Be sure to write it down." The exciseman never offended again in the same way.

Boston gives an interesting account of what was done in the district to support the cause of the king, though he has sadly to acknowledge the apathy of his own parishioners. "On Sabbath the 16th [October]," he says, "was publicly read an order for all to come on the morrow with their best arms into Kelso, there to receive orders that the country might be defended, for by this time the southern army of the rebels were turning eastward from Dumfries, and the Highlanders from their northern army were landed at North Berwick. I exhorted accordingly, but in vain. On the morrow, I myself went off towards Kelso, the Synod being to meet there on Tuesday, but not one person more went out of the parish. Coming to Kelso and finding the country from all quarters gathered together there, and our neighbours of Yarrow among the rest, to defend against the rebels, I was greatly troubled at the conduct of our people." Boston further tells us that at the meeting of Synod, which was held under these exciting conditions, Ramsay and he were appointed to draw up a paper to be read from every pulpit, warning the people against "the present rebellion." This they did to the satisfaction of the Synod.

In the great Marrow controversy Ramsay took a prominent part. He brought the full force of his powerful mind to bear upon those who were fearlessly supporting the unconditional presentation of the gospel to men. His views on this topic, of course, were entirely opposed to those of his old friend, the minister of Ettrick. Ere the contest closed an exciting encounter took place between the two parties. The occasion of it was a sermon preached by Gabriel Wilson of Maxton, as retiring Moderator of the Synod of Merse and Teviotdale, on the 17th October 1721. The sermon is well-known to all students of Scottish Church history under the title of *The Trust.* The text was 1 Tim. vi. 20. Heresy hunters thought they discovered Antinomianism in it, so that it came speedily under the survey of the ecclesiastical courts. As the case travelled through the judicatories of the Church, Ramsay had a good deal to do with it. On one occasion in the Synod, Boston made a proposal "tending to peace, without prejudice to truth. But Mr James Ramsay fired upon it, and as I remember offered to dissent in case it should pass; and on the contrary he proposed a severe decision, against which I was resolved to dissent. So the Synod perceiving the affair would go before the General Assembly, agreed to refer it to

them. At the Assembly [1723], Mr Wilson came off honourably, not one error being fixed on his sermon, notwithstanding of all the clamour that had been made against it."

Wilson was a great friend of the Erskines, both of whom came, at least once, to be beside him during his trial. It is told that Ralph was jocosely, perhaps rudely, accosted by Ramsay in these words—" Ralph, they say you are a poet, will you favour us with a specimen of your poetry ? " Yes, sir," he instantly replied, and alluding to the Christian name of their obnoxious friend, presented the clergyman with this appropriate couplet—

> " We be two angels, who did ride and run,
> To see the angel Gabriel fight and win."

Wilson could strike with no uncertain force. In the Commission of November 1722, he brought Ramsay under the lash of his invective, by pronouncing " a violent philippic " against him. William Hog, in writing to Wodrow, calls it a " flaming speech," and Principal Stirling speaks of it as " a very long discourse, full of bitter invective." Evidently the minister of Maxton had been roused to indignation by the continued persecution of his brother in Kelso.

The position which Ramsay took up with regard to the Marrow controversy, makes us learn with no surprise that he became a pronounced antagonist of the movement which led to the Secession. A full statement of the struggle does not need to be given here. It concerns Scottish Church history in general and the story of the Erskines in particular. We are only interested in Ramsay's connection with it. Brown in *Gospel Truth* records that Ramsay was " violent in the controversy " against Erskine and his supporters. In the Assembly of 1739, he made a motion in which he asked the Assembly to take the libel against the Seceders into consideration. In support of this motion he delivered a most vehement speech, which serves to indicate the wide gulf which separated him from the Evangelical party. The proceedings of the Supreme Court, however, on that occasion fall more naturally to be recorded in connection with the biography of James Bannatine, who presided over the Assembly in that year.

By this time Ramsay had enjoyed his first Moderatorship. The year was 1738. The business of the Assembly was conducted by him with such ability, that three years later he was

called again to occupy the same position of honour, the only other nominee being John Hepburn of Edinburgh, whom he defeated in the vote that was taken. During the Assembly of 1741, there came up for settlement a case in which Ramsay was locally interested. The parishioners of Bowden objected to the ordination of James Hume as their minister. The Assembly ordered the Presbytery of Selkirk to proceed with his settlement, if satisfied with his qualifications. The Presbytery, however, who had taken the side of the congregation of Bowden, refused to carry out the injunction of the Assembly. Thereupon the Synod, under the Assembly's instructions, intervened, and certain of their members were appointed to implement the decree of the Supreme Court. They made their way to Bowden protected by an armed force. The villagers stopped their advance. Ramsay who formed one of the deputation, and who seems to have been subjected on a previous occasion to some hustling in which he lost his wig, rode forward and addressed the parishioners. " What is all this, my masters ? " he cried. " You beat us last time, and my wig being lost, I was compelled to return home with a bare pow. But to-day I am better provided, as I have got a spare wig in my pocket." The sally caught ; the people gave up their opposition, and the settlement proceeded.

In 1745 Ramsay again took an active part in checking the manifestation of local sympathy with the young Pretender. Not many men could say that they had a hand in quelling both of the Jacobite risings. Four thousand insurgents came to Kelso under Prince Charlie, and remained for two days. The Government had sent a communication to all ministers asking them to report how many people in their parishes favoured the Stewart faction. On receipt of this document, Ramsay who knew some in Kelso had a preference for the old dynasty, acted with that pawky shrewdness which more than once had proved valuable to him. He invited to his manse a number of people who looked with sympathy upon the rebels. Having read to them the official document, he asked :— " What reply shall I send to the Government ? Do you know any disaffected persons among us ? " The question nonplussed the worthies, who answered that all their friends were loyal. " Well, well," said Mr Ramsay, " I am glad to hear this. Had there been any disloyal persons in the place, I am sure you must have known them. I shall accordingly

acquaint the Privy Council that I have consulted with the most intelligent of my parishioners, who assure me that the people here are all well affected towards his Majesty's Government."

A few stories linger in the Border district regarding the minister of Kelso. He was a man of powerful build, and was in the habit of walking to Edinburgh to the Assembly. On one occasion when wishing to attend the Synod, he borrowed an officer's horse. The steed proved restive to such a degree that Ramsay was desirous of dismounting, but was unable to do so. Thereupon he took some of his co-presbyters who were travelling with him, to witness that his failure to be present at the Synod was not owing to any fault of his own. Turning again towards home, he reached Kelso just as the dragoons were marching out, when his horse, faithful to its training, joined its comrades with the minister on its back, much to the enjoyment of the spectators. In the *Ochtertyre MSS.* it is told that at a certain meeting of Assembly, "Mr James Ramsay of Kelso, a man of strong mother wit but little learning, no innovator or metaphysician, knowing he should be called on by the Moderator to give his opinion [on the Simson case], applied to some young ministers for help. The rogues made a speech for him which he had no sooner pronounced than the cry of 'Heresy, Heresy,' resounded from all parts of the house; upon which Ramsay who was not ambitious of the crown of martyrdom said very coolly, 'If that be heresy, I renounce it.'" One wonders, however, whether John Ramsay has fathered his story upon the right individual, for his namesake was not in need of having others to prepare a speech for him, and the cool retraction of unsound opinions is hardly in accordance with the dogged nature of the minister of Kelso. As Witherspoon, however, tells the same story with modifications in his *Ecclesiastical Characteristics*, it must have some basis of fact. Possibly Ramsay was not a good *extempore* speaker, and may have lost his bearings in referring to the doctrinal subtleties which came before the Assembly in connection with the case of the Glasgow Professor. In one matter, however, it is certain that Ramsay holds the record. The closing address which he delivered from the Chair of the Assembly in 1741, consisted of this one sentence:—"It is with pleasure I can observe that the affairs of this Assembly have by the good hand of God upon us, been managed with

great decency and remarkable unanimity." Possibly many fathers and brethren agree to-day in thinking that Ramsay's example is a fairly good one, and might be copied with considerable advantage to all concerned.

One portion of Ramsay's life work remains to be noticed. He was a voluminous pamphleteer during the earlier period of his ministry, busying himself with one of the questions which bulked largely in the minds of people at the time. In the discussion of it he sent out brochure after brochure in rapid succession, testifying to the keenness of his intellect and his skill in debate with the pen. The burning topic which occupied his thoughts was Toleration, or in other words "Should the Episcopal form of worship be permitted in Scotland?" We need not be surprised that feeling should have been strong over such a matter. Ministers and members of the Church of the Revolution had suffered so severely at the hands of those who supported Episcopacy, that they could not, at least at first, bring themselves to allow the slightest standing ground to a form of religious service utterly abhorrent to them. The old Jacobites naturally were eager for it. On both sides the press was used for discussion. No one took such a prominent part in the controversy as Ramsay, who had the distinction, too, of being the first writer to oppose Toleration. Four tracts came from his pen. Their character and scope may be gathered from their titles. They were all published anonymously. First there came in 1703, *A Letter from a Gentleman to a Member of Parliament concerning Toleration*. This was followed in the same year by a vindication of the Letter entitled *Toleration's Fence Removed*. Again, in 1703, he issued *Remarks upon the Case of the Episcopal Clergy and those of the Episcopal Persuasion*. These pamphlets display great vigour in reasoning and calmness in style. The author argues that Toleration is unnecessary, because Episcopalians can come into the Established Church without re-ordination, provided their doctrine does not differ from that of Presbyterians. In many cases there was no difference. Further he opposes Toleration, because it would be equivalent to the introduction of Prelacy, the overthrow of the Established Church, and the Settlement of a Popish king. One interesting piece of information he gives us. He says that in the North of Scotland, under prelatic influence, Presbyterian ministers were caricatured, and children "taught to hold

out the finger, and cry 'Cammy' [Cameronian] to Presbyterian ministers." Ramsay completed his labours in this connection by publishing, likewise in 1703, *An Examination of Three Prelatical Pamphlets*, in which he deals at one point with the sufferings of the Covenanters, making special reference to the Wigtown martyrs. At page 38 it is stated :—"He [Matthias Symson, son of Andrew Symson, the curate of Kirkinner at the time] takes upon him to deny that the poor women spoke of were tied to stakes within flood-mark till the sea came up and drowned them ; and yet I have a paper from eye-and-ear witnesses of that abominable fact ; yea and though the soldiers by vertue of an order from the Council made some sham triall before they did thus execute these women, it may be well said they died without any due form or Process of Law." This is interesting. Ramsay wrote it only eighteen years after Margaret M'Lauchlison and Margaret Wilson were drowned, and he founded his statement on the testimony of actual observers of the martyrdom. We are grateful to the minister of Kelso for recording the facts of the case in this way. Even if no other proofs were forthcoming of the heartless sentence passed and carried out upon the two women, Ramsay's evidence is sufficient to dissipate the charge of Mark Napier that the story of the Wigtown martyrs is a baseless myth.

The question of Toleration is dead, and Ramsay's effusions upon it lie for the most part covered with dust on library shelves, and are taken down only by careful students of this period of Scottish history. But while Ramsay's writings no longer hold a place in the living literature of the land, he and his work have been immortalized in another fashion. For Witherspoon, minister in Paisley, and afterwards Principal of Princeton College, dedicated his *Ecclesiastical Characteristics* to Ramsay's departed spirit, and hailed him as the very incarnation of the temper and genius of Moderatism. Witherspoon's masterpiece is not so well known to-day as it ought to be, yet evangelical and literary Scotland will surely be slow to let it sink into oblivion. It is enough to say about it, that in the pungency and delicacy of its satire, it is not unworthy of occupying a place beside the *Provincial Letters* of Pascal. The full title of the book is—*Ecclesiastical Characteristics or the Arcana of Church Polity, being a humble attempt to open the mystery of moderation, wherein is shown a plain and easy way of attaining to the character of a moderate*

man as at present in repute in the Church of Scotland. Having dedicated it "To the Departed Ghost or Surviving Spirit of the late Reverend Mr ——, minister in ——," Witherspoon thus addresses him :—"It startled me a little that this conduct might perhaps by evil-disposed persons be represented as an approach to popery, and resembling their worship of saints ; but this I hope can scarcely be imputed to me, in the present case, since you were never esteemed a saint while you lived nor ever thirsted after that title." He proceeds to tell "this most illustrious SHADE," that he is encouraged to dedicate the book to him, because "there is not a living man who hath so good a claim to the compliment of a treatise upon my subject." At a loss to know how to present the book to him, the author is "at length relieved by reflecting that Mr Pope has assured us that the ghosts of departed ladies always haunt the places in which they delighted while they were alive, and therefore from analogy it is to be supposed that the same thing holds in regard to departed ministers." Accordingly, he intends to bring the book to the next General Assembly, in which "the shade" took such an interest when in the body, as almost with certainty that will be his "chief residence." He closes the dedication by saying, that "there is not one branch of the character recommended in the following pages in which you were not eminent ; and that there never was one stone by you left unturned, for promoting the good cause" of moderation.

All doubt as to the identity of the individual whom Witherspoon had in mind, is dispelled by the statement made in the ninth of the Maxims he gives as guiding rules for all true Moderates. "There are also some," it says, "who not only persevere but gloriously improve in moderation in old age and to their dying day ; of which number was the late Rev. Mr J. R. in K., whose name I have thought proper to record in this immortal work, that it may be had in everlasting remembrance." Truly no man was ever so pilloried in the public eyes after his death. And it is no wonder that the *Characteristics* created a sensation which did not die down till after the publication of a fifth edition in 1763, ten years after Witherspoon anonymously flung his satire on the Church, one part of which was deeply amused and the other part vehemently enraged at the keenness and truthfulness of his attack.

We hardly know enough of the life and preaching of Ramsay to enable us to see why he should be chosen, of all men, as the embodiment of the spirit of Moderatism. When we remember, too, that Ramsay had been dead for four years before Witherspoon published his work, the mystery of the selection of the minister of Kelso deepens. Yet be the cause what it may, the *Ecclesiastical Characteristics* will ever remain as a monument of the genius of Witherspoon, and a proof of the commanding place held by Ramsay in the section of the Church to which he belonged.

Few of Ramsay's letters seem to have been preserved. One to Principal Stirling, to be found in the library of Glasgow University, shows his writing to have been very uncouth. Wodrow has a brief and not quite complimentary reference to a sermon Ramsay preached before the Assembly in 1717. "In the afternoon, Mr James Ramsay on Psalm cxv. 1, and we had a stale sermon and remarks on the Lord's hand in deliverances" (*Corr.* ii. 266). Ramsay, however, was beloved by his people and his office-bearers. The Session Records thus speak of his passing away. Apparently a meeting for prayer was held in the Church on the first Monday of every month. That was no mean thing for a Moderate to maintain. But "this day," says the minute, "in a special sympathy with our worthy minister, Mr Ramsay, now drawing near to death," the people and elders bowed before God's throne of grace. And on the same day, the 3rd July 1749, it is added, "betwixt three and four in the afternoon, the Reverend Worthy and Pious Mr James Ramsay, minister of the gospel in Kelso, died in the eighty-third year of his age, and in the forty-third of his ministry in this place, to the great grief and loss of the congregation and presbytery, nay to the loss of the whole Church of Scotland, where he has been twice Moderator of the General Assembly with great applause, and he is now justly and heartily lamented by all that truly knew him. He was buried in a place, where others his predecessors had been laid, on the 5th July thereafter."

If this be a faithful account of Ramsay's relations with his parishioners, it does not altogether coincide with Witherspoon's description of a true Moderate. For one characteristic of a full-blown Moderate ought to be this—he "must be very unacceptable to the common people."

Ramsay was married late in life to Margaret Borthwick,

widow of the Rev. John Lauder of Eccles. The marriage took place in Edinburgh on the 27th June 1731. Mrs Ramsay died in 1768. A daughter, Elizabeth, became the wife of the Rev. Robert Park, minister of Foulden.

CHAPTER XXVI

JAMES BANNATINE, MODERATOR, 1739

James Bannatine, who for many years was minister of the Trinity College Church in Edinburgh, was distinguished in two different ways. In the first place he stands out as one of the most inveterate opponents of the Marrow Men, and in the second place, in an age which cannot be said to be characterized by the elegance of its literary style, he takes a high position for the beauty and purity of his diction. We do not meet with any trace of his name till we find him acting as tutor in the family of Lord Dundas of Arniston. In all likelihood he was educated at the University of Edinburgh. At any rate he was licensed by the Presbytery of Dalkeith on the 26th October 1703, when he was in his twenty-ninth year. The appointment he held at Arniston is a tribute to his scholarly attainments, while the influence of Dundas was no mean advantage to a young probationer, making his way into the ministry of the Church. Four years after license, Bannatine was ordained to the rich parish of Whittingham, upon the duties of which he entered on the 19th June 1707. The following eulogistic reference to the abilities of the new minister of Whittingham is found in the minutes of the Presbytery of Dunbar. "May 21st, 1707. Master James Bannatine gave proof of his knowledge of the originall languages by exponing the Greek N. Test. *ad aperturam libri*, and some part of the 23rd Hebrew Psalm, and sustained his thesis *De Satisfactione Christi*, answered catecheticall questions *extempore*, and did so well acquit himself in all, that the Presbytery did appoint his edict to be served at Whittingham, upon Sabbath come eight days, and the Rev. Mr James Smith, minister at Morum, being occasionally here present did undertake to do it, Mr Bannatine being to preach at his kirk that day." It is singular that the edict should have been served by a member of another Presbytery. The two parishes of Whittingham and Morham were close to each other, and the ministers who had both acted in the capacity

of tutor to the family of Arniston, were lifelong friends. A further extract from the Presbytery minutes shows the completion of the arrangements made for Mr Bannatine's ordination. "June 12th, 1707. This day Mr Bannatine's edict, being served at the kirk of Whittingham upon June 1st by Mr James Smith, minister at Morham, was endorsed under his hand, and was here called at the most patent door of this Church, and no persons appearing to object, the Presbytery appointed this day eight days to be his ordination at Whittingham, and Mr Robert Stark, minister at Stenton, to preach the ordination sermon."

Of his seven years' ministry in this beautiful rural district no reminiscence seems to have come down to us. He must, however, have been carefully watching the course of events, and forming his opinions with regard to the great matters at issue, both in Church and State. Preferment came to him in 1714, when he was called to the Trinity College Church, Edinburgh. His induction took place on the 10th October. In this charge he remained to the end of his life, taking an active part in the general ecclesiastical work of the city and the country. His colleague for many years in Edinburgh was the well-known George Logan.

In 1723 an anonymous pamphlet appeared, bearing the title *An Essay on Gospel and Legal Preaching by a minister of the Church of Scotland*. It attracted at once a great deal of attention, on account of the virulence with which it attacked the views of Erskine and his friends. Brown of Whitburn and others, though professing to know from whose pen the pamphlet proceeded, do not mention the name of the author. The *Essay*, Brown says, was written by a "minister of good abilities with common consent of the leading clergy." Scott's *Fasti* attributes the *Essay* to George Logan, but there is ample evidence, both of an external and internal kind, to show that on Bannatine rests the responsibility of its publication. A list of pamphlets in the handwriting of the period, as Agnew tells us in his *Theology of Consolation* (p. 398), contains this item :—"An Essay upon Gospel and Legal Preaching by Mr Ballantine, minister at Edinburgh, anno 1723." Additional proof of its origin is afforded by Riccaltoun of Hopekirk, who even before his ordination championed the Marrow Men, and gave the ablest reply to the charges brought against them. Riccaltoun's second publication in the controversy bore the title, *A Review of an Essay on Gospel and*

Legal Preaching in several Letters to a Friend, Edinburgh, 1723. That the author of the *Essay* was a minister commonly known as "Mr Ballantine," is evident from a humorous device made use of by Riccaltoun. After his pamphlet was printed, Riccaltoun discovered certain clerical errors in it, These he corrected under the heading "Errata." One to which he calls attention appears in capital letters in this form :—"For Balentinus, read Valentinus." A reference to the passage in the text shows that it runs in this way :—"Tertullian tells us that Balentinus, the author of the sect of Valentinians, was so swelled with the conceit of his merit that it made him think of being made a bishop. I do not think our Essayer is so very aspiring." The erratum, so innocently pointed out, yet so naïvely set down, was meant to let the anonymous writer and the public know that the authorship was no longer a secret. Riccaltoun certainly was no clumsy disputant. His home-thrust revealed the master's hand. Its humour could not fail to be appreciated by men on both sides of the controversy. It need hardly be added that Balentine was a common variant of the name of the minister of Trinity College Church. If further proof on the question of the authorship of the pamphlet is wanted, it is furnished by Wodrow, who in his *Analecta* writes, "I am told one Mr Rutherford, a preacher in the east country, is thought also the author of the answer to Mr Bannatine's pamphlet" (iii. 236).

The style of the *Essay* is in entire accordance with that of another volume which Bannatine issued, entitled *Mistakes about Religion*. If compared in the most casual way with the writings of Logan, it is at once seen that it could not have come from his pen. Logan's style is cumbersome in the highest degree. Bannatine's is characterized by culture and grace. These are the characteristics, too, of the *Essay*. We do not, therefore, have any hesitation in attributing to Bannatine the *Essay*, in which the attempt was made to disparage the supporters of the Marrow doctrine. If in this effort he had the support and approval of the ministers of Edinburgh and other leaders in the Church, we are forced to admit that the preaching in the city pulpits had changed since the Revolution, when it was the care of the Church at large to supply the congregations in Edinburgh with men who had stood the test of the persecution. It would have been most interesting to know what Elizabeth West, who

rejoiced in the sermons of Meldrum and Wisheart, would have said about the teaching of Bannatine and his friends.

It was the great aim of Bannatine in the *Essay* to show that the preaching of the Marrow Men was really Antinomian in its character. He also sought to prove that the objection which the Erskines took to those who did not agree with them, viz. that their preaching was wholly legal, was a complete misrepresentation. Bannatine maintained that no preaching could be spoken of as legal, unless it boldly proclaimed that salvation was in no sense the gift of God, but was to be secured by the good works and merits of the individual. Riccaltoun's reply to him is extremely apposite. " In stating what legal preaching is," he says, " [the essayist] tells us several things which indeed are so, yet he takes no notice of *criminal omissions* . . . which may justify the denomination of *legal* preaching (though the preacher do not distinctly say that perfect obedience is the condition of life). If some ingredients, absolutely necessary, unto a prescribed potion, be left out by the apothecary to whom the care of making it up is committed, may we not say it is not the potion prescribed, though all the rest do also belong to the prescription, and though nothing contrary to it be put in? The application is easy. Though a man, in his preaching morality, should say nothing that is directly heterodox, yet if he omit these doctrines that are necessary ingredients to make his sermon a truly evangelical discourse, I will not say he is '*nick-named*' a Legal Preacher" (*Review*, p. 7).

The strictures passed upon the *Essay* in Brown's *Gospel Truth* may be given in full. In it Bannatine is charged with exhibiting the Marrow Men as " opposing morality, because of its being an enemy to their lusts ; that they are not for the severity of Christian morals, but would have them struck out of the scheme of religion, and some airy notions placed in their room, that will give men hopes of heaven when they come not the length of honest heathens ; that they distinguish away our morals and slacken our obligation to a strict and rigid observance of all the several parts and branches of our duty ; that they dash the second table of the law to pieces, to raise the first on the ruins of the second, and that the Representers and others likeminded plainly insinuate that preaching the duties of the moral law is legal preaching and that urging faith and repentance were so." This certainly is strong speaking and shows the view that was taken of the

Essay during the conflict over the Marrow, when men's minds were excited, and the lines of division sharply drawn. But now after the lapse of two centuries, when the smoke of battle has been dispersed, it is possible to take a kindlier view of the attitude of Bannatine towards the pronouncedly Evangelical school within the Church.

It may frankly be admitted, for instance, that there is much in the volume to which no exception could be taken by the most orthodox believer. Riccaltoun himself, in his *Review of the Essay*, speaks on this point in no uncertain way. Here is what he says:—" If the anonymous author be the man whom I have heard named by some who pretend to know it, he is indeed a sagacious writer, and has brought forth a very accurate composure writ in a neat stile, and in a method abundantly exact, though artfully concealed and prudently contrived to inculcate the impressions designed to be made upon the minds of the Seceders. Nor can I refuse that there are in it several excellent truths very well illustrated, and seasonable Dutys judiciously explained and pathetically urged." On the concluding portion of the *Essay*, Riccaltoun has penned some highly eulogistic remarks. " In these pages," he writes to his correspondent (for the *Review* is in the form of letters to a friend), " the author discourses upon gospel preaching and the character of a gospel preacher. I told you at the beginning, I pretended not to attack this whole book. I own what is truly valuable and commendable, and must say my soul was refreshed in reading these following pages. And except some few sentences, which coincide with what hath formerly been animadverted upon, I can cheerfully agree to what remains of his book, and do think it savours more of a gospel strain than one would think is consistent with some of the errors of the former part" (p. 127). This is generous praise, and must be put down alike to the credit of Bannatine to whom it is given, and of Riccaltoun who gives it.

A perusal of the *Essay*, too, even in its other parts, reveals in the mind of the author a correctness of faith and statement to which no exception can be taken. For example, of the divine power displayed in regeneration, Bannatine writes :— " It is as great a miracle in the moral world to raise a sinner dead in trespasses, and buried in the grave of his corruptions, to a spiritual life, as it is in the natural world to raise a man from death to a natural life" (p. 5). On the difference

between the covenant of works and the covenant of grace he is quite explicit. The covenant of works, he asserts, " turns us inward to works of our own as our righteousness, the gospel turns us outward to bottom all our hopes upon a Mediator's righteousness " (p. 9). " I shall go one step further," he continues, " and maintain that the joining of works with faith in the business of Justification, is legal preaching " (p. 10). " When the light of the glorious Reformation broke out, the doctrine of a sinner's Justification was set on its true basis, to be by faith alone without the works of the law " (p. 59). About the word " Condition " in relation to salvation, a word which even Boston sorrowfully allowed, Bannatine says :—" I look on the word *Condition* to be good and bad, just as men take it. If by condition be meant that which merits anything at the hand of God, or founds our title to Heaven, or is practicable by the power and strength of our natural abilities, or anything done by us that comes in the room of perfect obedience under the first Covenant, or anything previous as the condition of the first grace, I shall freely own that I am not for a condition in any of these senses " (p. 63). " Our title is not grounded on our faith or anything in us, but upon a perfect righteousness without us, which becomes ours when we believe in Jesus " (p. 64). In one place he pours out his soul to Christ as the heavenly Advocate, in words of genuine devotion. " Ever blessed Jesus, I need thy powerful intercession every day for the purification of my heart, and the pardon of my daily guilt. May I every day make use of Thee for Justification and Sanctification ; may my last and expiring breath be spent in the warmest addresses to Thee, my dearest Saviour, for purity and pardon " (p. 79).

Such are the sentiments contained in the *Essay*, and they could easily be multiplied. They almost make us wonder whether it would not be more appropriate to put Bannatine among the prophets of the Marrow, rather than among its detractors. When we read them, we agree with Riccaltoun and say our soul is refreshed by them. How came it, then, that this volume, from the pen of the minister of the Trinity College Church, was accepted by many people as the most polished weapon with which to attack Erskine and his friends, who in turn looked upon it as hostile to the views of grace and truth which were dear to them ? This, at least, may be said in explanation. One matter which roused the antagonism of the Marrow Men towards it was the place which

Bannatine sought to give to Repentance in the spiritual life. Which is first in the order of nature, Faith or Repentance? And is Repentance necessary for the forgiveness of sin? These were the questions debated, and Bannatine made no secret of his opinion that it was useless to spend time in discussing the order in which Faith and Repentance occur, in connection with conversion and the forgiveness of sin. He boldly maintained, too, that Repentance is necessary after a believer falls into sin. A good deal of the battle raged round these points. How much is involved in them need not concern us now. Most people will agree with Spurgeon's way of putting it:—"When a carriage wheel begins to move, tell me which spoke of the wheel moves first, and then I shall tell you whether Faith comes before Repentance, or Repentance before Faith."

But of course the Marrow Men had rightly another matter of controversy with Bannatine and his friends. And here the struggle was hottest, and the lines of separation showed themselves most clearly. The doctrine of the Marrow is Antinomian—that was the charge which was sounded again and again, and from which no defence, however sufficient it might seem, could free Erskine and his supporters in the eyes of a large section of the Church. Bannatine pressed this charge with great persistence. He fastened the opprobious epithet on his opponents, and nothing they could do or say was allowed to remove it. Every Marrow Man was an Antinomian, who set open the gates of iniquity for himself and all who agreed with him. The mysterious thing about the charge is simply this:—How could men in their sober senses accuse the leaders of the Secession of entertaining and proclaiming doctrines which had any other end in view than that of denouncing sin and promoting holiness? It is just a repetition of the experience of Paul, who was slanderously reported to preach the same unholy message.

But after all, was it wilful misrepresentation on the part of the opponents of the Marrow? In the case of many of them it can hardly be judged to be such. In Bannatine's case, at least, the evidence is all against such an explanation. He hit the Erskines hard, but he firmly believed them to be wrong, and was convinced that they ought to be hit. His own picture of a gospel preacher, which drew out Riccaltoun's admiration, must be accepted as the ideal he placed before himself and tried to realize. It is no fancy picture. We

must believe that Bannatine said in his own heart :—" I try to be like that myself." And yet, though so near the Marrow Men in these ways, he was not of them and wrought for their deposition. Was it all a mistake, a blindness which fell upon him and others in real sympathy with the Evangel, keeping them from seeing the significance of the preaching of the Erskines, and how it made for holiness as nothing else could make for it ? Perhaps it may have been so, and charity will have it so about the author of the *Essay upon Gospel and Legal Preaching*. Blindness in part did happen to him and his allies, until the fulness of Scotland should come in.

In further excuse for the position Bannatine took up, it must be remembered that some of the expressions in the Marrow are loose, and lend themselves to the charge of Antinomianism. But even if that be true, it was only right that a difference should be drawn between Fisher, the author of the Marrow, and the Erskines, who recommended it as a guide in Christian doctrine. All the more ought this to have been done, after Erskine and his friends had laid on the table of the Assembly the answers they were asked to give to the questions in dispute.

In order to show that the Marrow before its publication by Fisher did not receive the full and careful revision which he ought to have given to it, reference may be made to one most unguarded expression which appeared in its pages. Bannatine called attention to it, and asserted that while the English editions contained the amazing statement, the later Scottish editions dropped it. In the sixth edition of the Marrow, published in 1648, this sentence, he tells us, is found on page 177. " For though Faith in the blood of Christ takes away that guilt which subjected you to the legal curse, yet obedience must take away that guilt which subjected you to a fatherly displeasure." And then he adds :—" This passage is not to be found in the Edin. Edit. 1722, p. 145, where it is entirely passed over ; it has got a cast of their *index expurgatorius*. The reason of this management is pretty plain and obvious ; they did not think it for their credit that an author they so warmly defended, should venture abroad here with such stumbling doctrine." Even Riccaltoun says about it :— " The expression . . . I own is harsh. I shall not try to defend it." It is certainly astonishing that such a passage should exist in Fisher's book. It is so opposed to Marrow doctrine, that one would like to find out how it got there.

After such a statement, which had escaped the eagle eye of Hog, who first sent the Marrow to the press in Scotland, had thus been discovered and pilloried, it is hardly a matter for wonder that care was taken that Fisher's great treatise, which in spite of its defects was the basis of Secession teaching, should not go forth again to the people without explanatory notes. Accordingly, Boston issued an edition of it with comments of his own, as Crisp in England had done before him. This edition, often reprinted, spread itself over the whole of Scotland, and was found alike in the castle of the peer and the cottage of the peasant.

The fight between an Evangelical of the old school like Bannatine, and a supporter of the Marrow doctrine like Riccaltoun, has its lessons. Both men meant really very much the same thing. A friendly talk together over matters in Bannatine's house in Cant's Close in Edinburgh, might have made them see eye to eye and saved much heartburning in the Church.

Another pamphlet, also without the name of the author, came from the pen of the minister of Trinity College in 1737. It bears the title *Mistakes about Religion amongst the Causes of our Defection from the Spirit of the Gospel.* It is a fairly elaborate treatise, divided into fifteen sections, in each of which he calls attention to some one-sided or erroneous view of religion. A few of the propositions which he advances and supports with a great deal of skill and moderation, will illustrate the scope and tenor of the book.

Section I. Some place their religion in Christ without them, when they have not a due regard to Christ within them.

Section V. Some have a greater regard to the promises than the precepts of Christ.

Section VI. Some are zealous for the duties of the first table of the law, when they neglect second table duties.

Section VII. There are others who place their Religion in the duties of the second table and the social virtues, when they neglect first table duties.

Section XII. Some place Religion in the means, when they neglect the end for which they are appointed.

Section XIII. There are others who disregard the means, and think they are not necessary to obtain the end for which they are appointed.

The portion of the table of contents just quoted shows the balanced way in which Bannatine treats his subject. In the

course of his remarks he reveals so genuinely his sympathy with the evangelical doctrine of the atonement, that regret is again aroused that he should have entered the lists against Erskine. Here is the way in which he sums up his observations on the supreme place held by the cross of Christ: "Thus we see the great moment and importance of the death of Jesus in the Christian Religion; it is built upon it, and all the parts of it look to it as their vital centre. I have insisted and linger on this, because I find that it has not been much considered in this view, and that some have an antipathy at a Religion that has a Priest and Sacrifice in it; but a Religion without a Priest and Sacrifice is not the Religion of Adam's fallen degenerate race, but of an innocent man. It would have made a perfect unsinning creature happy, but cannot bring rebels and sinful creatures to heaven" (p. 19).

His observations on the debated question of reading the Porteous Act from the pulpit may be given. They occur in his discussion of the maxim that "Mistakes about zeal [are] the cause of much sin." "About twenty years ago, when the Oath of Abjuration was imposed on the ministers of this Church, I saw a publick religion make a great deal of noise to the supplanting of private religion; but I never had more lively apprehensions of it than at this time, when we have the image and picture of it drawn to the life and set before our eyes. What a mighty noise we have about reading or not reading an Act of Parliament, as if the whole of religion depended on so small a matter, as if it would make us either the better or worse Christians. The kingdom of God is not meat or drink, but peace, righteousness and joy in the Holy Ghost. Neither he that reads or not reads is one whit the better man for it. We will find in our dying moment, when our thoughts are wiser and cooler, that sincere godliness lies in quite other things. Every man should be persuaded in his own mind, and follow his own persuasions. 'Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth.' He that readeth should not despise him that readeth not; and he who doth not read should not judge him that readeth" (p. 105). The reasoning here is somewhat specious, and hardly deals with the real point at issue, which was—Had the State the right to compel the Church to read the Act at public worship?

Space cannot be found for a most impressive warning which Bannatine gives to men who delay to enter the kingdom

of God. Delivered from the pulpit of Trinity College Church, such an appeal could not fail to tell. I give only one other quotation. It concerns the necessity and place of the public means of grace ; and certainly at the present day it cannot but be of interest to see how a minister, nearly 200 years ago, sought to prove the value and wisdom of united worship. He advances positions such as these :—" Our Blessed Saviour in the days of His flesh observed the ordinances that were of divine institution." " God to encourage us to join together in His public worship, hath promised His presence with us." " Devout persons in all ages have signified their great regard to the public ordinances, and their uneasiness when they had no access to attend them." Men " may imagine that they cannot receive instructions from ministers. It may be so with some, who may be as knowing in the doctrines of Christianity as they ; but then they should consider that prayers and praises are very considerable parts of his worship and why not join in them ? It is not below the greatest and most learned, publicly to acknowledge the God that made them and a Saviour who came to save them from eternal destruction. Besides they would do well to consider that, how knowing soever they may be, they need to have their memories refreshed, their good purposes and resolutions fortified, their hearts warmed with a sense of divine things ; their faults and follies brought to their remembrance to humble them, their duty pressed on them that they may practise it." " If a sermon warm my heart with the love of God and Christ, though it do not enlighten my head, I have reason to bless God for it and ever shall." " When is it that [the saints] make the greatest progress in piety and goodness ? Is it not when they are most diligent in the use of the means, both private and public, that God has appointed ? Their souls then follow hard after God, and they find to their experience, the great benefit of them. But when they languish in the use of means, either intermit their duty or go about it in a careless way and manner, they fall into sad decays. It is not with them as in months past, when the candle of the Lord did shine upon them " (pp. 85-93).

Bannatine closes his treatise with some " Principles and Maxims whereby Saints endeavour to govern their lives." One of them runs in this way :—" There is no returning to God and our original state, but through Jesus Christ, who is the way, the truth and the life, the centre of our union and

the only medium of our intercourse with heaven." This is another :—" The true way to judge of our religion and our progress in it is by our conformity to Christ in his life, death and resurrection" (p. 147). Again Riccaltoun would not hesitate to say :—" By these things my soul is refreshed."

A third pamphlet, likewise bearing no name, was issued by Bannatine in 1738. Only a brief reference to it is needful. It is entitled *Peace and Truth or a Peaceable Plea for Unity and Truth in Opposition to Division and Separation.* In it the author first expounds the nature, origin and effects of schism, and then he gives a reply to the Testimony drawn up by the four Brethren and which he characterizes as being "in several things uncharitable, false and unscriptural." Incidentally he gives us his opinion of Patronage. Regarding the charge made by Erskine, that the Church submitted to the restoration of Patronage in 1712, he candidly says :— "It were to be wished it had not been" brought back. In the closing portion of the treatise, he dwells on the means to be used for promoting peace and unity. Some of the means he suggests are quaint and original. For example, he says :—" We are not to imagine ourselves obliged to contradict everything to which we cannot assent. For some things of a philosophic and historical nature, nay, some lesser things in religion, are of such small importance, that it is not worth while to venture a breach of peace and love for the sake of them. When our blessed Saviour was in the world, though he could easily have rectified many mistakes in philosophy and history, and in other arts and sciences, yet he did not trouble the world with these things, but contented himself to undeceive and set men right in those matters of religion which regarded the life and the eternal salvation of men." Bannatine's view of the Person of Christ indicated in the words just quoted, is interesting. Another wise maxim which he lays down for keeping the peace runs in this way :—" We must watch ourselves that we be not ready to take fire and be offended with the seeming provocations of others." Finally he sums up with this general counsel—" Let us in our practice avoid everything that savours of pride and vanity and haughtiness, or taking advantage of little trespasses, whispering, talebearing, unnecessary repeating former misdemeanours, censoriousness, or whatsoever is contrary to Christian love and charity."

This plea for peace and unity was the last publication which Bannatine sent through the press. It has been con-

venient to group his literary productions together, but while engaged with them he was at the same time taking a full share of the general work of the Church. His outstanding position in this connection brought him to the Chair of the Assembly in 1739.

It was only to be expected after the Moderatorship of Ramsay in 1738, that his successor would belong to the same school. No one could have been chosen to take his place and be the mouthpiece of the majority of the Assembly, more suited to their mind, than the minister of Trinity College. Fathers and brethren in overwhelming numbers wished to set their foot sternly upon the leaders of the Secession, and Bannatine was wholly at one with them in this respect, strong in his own opinions, and able to express them in the sharpest and most polished style. No shafts aimed at Erskine and his friends could be dipped in more bitter venom than those fashioned by "Balentinus." His pamphlets had given the Church a sample of his incisive pleading. His *obiter dicta*, well-known as they must have been in ecclesiastical circles, would prepare the minds of all in sympathy with him for a feast of invectives suited to their palate. Willison of Dundee and Naismyth of Dalmeny were nominated for the Chair at the same time, but Bannatine was preferred.

The great matter before the Assembly was the case of the Seceders. Early in the proceedings they were called upon to present their answer to the libel with which they had been served. Taking their place at the bar of the House, they gave in a paper which plainly showed that they had made up their minds to separate themselves entirely from the Established Church. Return to its communion was not possible for them, nor was it desired by them. They declared that the Courts of the Church, by the position they had taken up, were unlawful, and consequently it was impossible for them to submit themselves to their authority, especially to the authority of that General Assembly before whose tribunal they now appeared. As Moderator, Bannatine had already addressed them, exhorting them "to consider their disorderly courses, and to submit to that Church to which they had vowed obedience. He told them that though they were come there to answer a libel, the Assembly was now ready, upon their submission, to receive them with open arms; and besought them to be no longer deaf to the calls of reason and scripture" (Morren, *Annals*, 1. 7). It was

all of no avail. Erskine and his friends could only say :— "*Non possumus.*" One step only remained to be taken in this sorrowful matter. Willison strongly urged another year's delay. Certainly it shows the misgiving which must have been in many hearts, when his motion to postpone till next Assembly the passing of the sentence of deposition was carried by a small majority. At the same time, the mind of the Assembly was made up that no other course was open in the event of the brethren persisting in their opposition. Accordingly it was resolved that "this Assembly do earnestly recommend it to the next General Assembly, to inflict the censure of deposition without further delay, upon such of the said defenders as shall not, betwixt [this] and that time, . . . retract the said pretended act and declinature, and return to their duty and submission to this Church" (*ibid.* p. 9).

At the opening of the next Assembly, Bannatine as retiring Moderator preached from 1 Tim. iv. 12. Afterwards, as a member of the Court, he took upon himself the very serious responsibility of moving the deposition of the Seceding brethren. It was a momentous act. The Erskines and their six friends were in accordance with the motion which Bannatine made, seemingly without hesitation, solemnly "deposed from the office of the holy ministry." Fifteen ministers and four elders crowned themselves with honour by dissenting from the finding of the Assembly (*ibid.* 18). Even at the end, the heart of the Assembly was moved with compassion, in a way which clearly showed the sorrow with which many members viewed the act of deposition just approven by the highest Court of the Church. Sentence was delayed till the afternoon of the 15th May—the term day —in order "it is thought, that the deposed ministers might have a legal title to the current half-year's stipend." Such a gracious act only increases our wonder that no *via media* was found earlier in the proceedings, to keep within the Church the strong evangelical fervour which Erskine and his supporters possessed, and which was so much needed by the Scottish people. Doubtless in the temper of both parties, agreement was impossible. Yet we cannot fail to note that Bannatine, then in his sixty-sixth year, seems to have felt no scruple in laying on the table of the Assembly, the trenchant motion which cut off the Seceding brethren from all part in the historic Church of their fathers.

Mention must be made of another item found in the records of the Assembly presided over by Bannatine It was reported

to the house that the executors of Wodrow of Eastwood had placed in the hands of the agents of the church, a number of MS. volumes which Wodrow had gathered together. The Assembly thereupon appointed a Committee with powers to deal with the matter, and to purchase such volumes as they might think proper. It was not, however, till 1742, that the business was settled. In that year the sum of thirty pounds was ordered to be paid to the representatives of Wodrow for certain volumes of manuscripts, which were to be "deposited in the Clerk's hands, that any minister or elder of the church might have access to peruse them." It may be added that it was the Advocates' Library which most prudently enriched itself by securing the great bulk of the papers of the indefatigable minister of Eastwood. Other volumes are in the possession of Glasgow University. To any student who has examined the manuscripts left by Wodrow, it must be a continual wonder how one, who was cut off soon after middle life, accumulated such a vast stock of valuable historical material, both original and copied. Wodrow was simply the incarnation of industry.

It fell to Bannatine at the close of the Assembly in which he occupied the Chair, to make some remarks on the business which had been transacted. He thus referred to the case of the Seceders :—"It could not but very sensibly affect us to behold so many who were once of us, standing at our bar as panels, renouncing all communion with us, and offering insults to us that we can hardly find a parallel to, and yet borne with so much patience and forbearance. When we behold others insisting so much upon their *Act* and *Testimony*, let us insist upon the *Testimony* of Jesus Christ, the glorious gospel of God our Saviour. Let us please our people to their edification, but never fear them, for this will be a great snare. Let us ever remember that we are to be their guides and overseers to heaven, and not they ours. Let us be zealous for the support of our happy Establishment; if we support it, it will support us; if we suffer it to fall, we will be buried in its ruins." Such words let us see the amazing bitterness with which this great controversy was waged within the Church.

The newspapers of the time give us the following account of the ceremonial which took place on the opening day of Bannatine's Assembly. It is of sufficient interest to be quoted. "The Assembly," we are told, "met at 10 o'clock in the New Church. Soon after, the Right Honourable

John, Earl of Hyndford, repaired thither with a most splendid retinue, (the City Guard, headed by their proper officers, drawn up on both sides, drums beating the march), in the following order :—

The Macers, carrying their maces.
Gentlemen Ushers, two and two.
The Heritable Usher.
The Purse Bearer.
His Grace the High Commissioner.
His Grace's Pages.
The Nobility, and other persons of distinction.
His Grace's Footmen, two and two, in rich liveries.

He was received at the Church door by the Right Honourable the Lord Provost, Magistrates, etc. His Grace being placed in his Majesty's seat (which was richly dressed with equipage brought from the royal wardrobe in the Abbey), and proper devoirs being paid him, a sermon was preached by Mr James Ramsay of Kelso, the former Moderator, from Jer. xvi. 8." The close of the Assembly is thus described :— " The Assembly rose about five afternoon, the members accompanying his Grace and retinue to his lodgings, where they bid him adieu " (Morren, i. 295).

In another way Bannatine comes before us in connection with the general history of the time. He and his family were called upon to endure some of the discomforts which loyal subjects of the crown passed through, when the young Pretender gained possession of Edinburgh in 1745. By this time his wife, Katharine Blair, to whom he was married on the 19th March 1708, and who was a granddaughter of Robert Blair of St Andrews, seems to have died. At least no mention is made of her in connection with the incident. He had, however, two sons, George, just ordained to the ministry at Craigie, and Hugh, afterwards minister at Ormiston, and two daughters, one of whom, Katharine, was married in 1748, to her cousin, the celebrated Dr Hugh Blair. For the story we are indebted to the recently published *Woodhouselee Manuscript*. The writer says :—" Mr Balenton's two daughters and Grissell fled from Edinburgh. They told us, Sabbath, September 29, some white cockad gentlemen came and frighted the meeting at sermon there, the end of afternoon sermon, for the castle threatened to fyer and all the people were in confusion." At Woodhouselee, Katharine had the company and protection of her cousin, for we read, " Mr Hews Blair and Balentin went from Woodhouselee to Curry church." On the 3rd October, some of the party

ventured to visit the capital. " This day Thoma is gone in with Hews Blair and Balentin and two Miss Balentins to town." Bannatine's son, George, hearing of the stirring experiences of his friends, came from Craigie to see how they fared. He " left his horse at Woodhouselee, and walked to town afoot. It struck Lumsden, a volunteer with his white cocad and his sword under his arm, that Mr Balentin was a spy, and he follows him up and chalanges him and requirs him to go to the Guaird. Balentin, seeing him a young lad, snatches his sword from under his arm, and Lumsden runs off and calls out, but George being near Cant's Closehead, where his father's house was, goes straight home. In a little, come a strong detachment of Highlanders. Mr Balentin took alarme, and the house being up two pair of stairs, he tied the sheets of the bed to an easie chare, and goes out at the window and escapes." Evidently George was a good specimen of muscular Christianity, but as he made his way down by the bed sheets, he caused consternation in the heart of worthy Mrs Ferguson who lived below. For as he hurried down his improvised means of escape, he hit against his neighbour's window and broke the glass, so that Mrs Ferguson, imagining that Prince Charlie's kilted soldiers were storming her house, was beside herself with fright. We can picture to ourselves how the minister of Craigie would set off this incident with dramatic touches amid the boisterous merriment of congenial friends, for Jupiter Carlyle says of him, that he had a " great deal of Falstaffian humour." Hugh Bannatine was not so fortunate in escaping the attention of the Highlanders, for they found him " in the planting at Woodhouslee and took 5 and sixpence off him." The name of the minister of Trinity College does not appear in the account of the doings of the young Pretender in Edinburgh. Perhaps like his colleague Logan, he had gone further afield. But the experiences of his children during these exciting days, would be of absorbing interest to him, as they told the tale of them in the quiet house in Cant's Close, with Mrs Ferguson as a listener, delivered now for ever from all fear of the Highland host.

Little more falls to be recorded of Bannatine. In 1745, he was nominated once more for the Chair of the General Assembly, but the honour went to the younger William Wisheart. Bannatine continued to labour in his charge in Edinburgh till his death on the 10th April 1756, in the eighty-second year of his age and the forty-ninth of his ministry.

CHAPTER XXVII

GEORGE LOGAN, MODERATOR, 1740

George Logan, who took a very prominent place in the public life of his day, and incurred the undying hatred of the Tory party in Scotland, was a scion of the house of Logan in the parish of Old Cumnock. His father's name was George. Though belonging to the next generation, the well-known facetious laird of Logan, Hugh of that ilk, was a member of the same family. It is difficult to determine the exact relationship in which the future Moderator stood to the Logan stock. Representatives of the family of Logan were resident in Edinburgh, where they were connected with the legal profession. He may have sprung from them. But through his mother, who was a daughter of the Rev. John Cunningham, minister of Cumnock, he had a very close link with the historic Ayrshire parish. Through her, too, he was the nephew of the famous scholar and critic, Alexander Cunningham, who, after holding for a brief time the Chair of Civil Law in Edinburgh, lived for the most part at the Hague. In his Dutch home, Cunningham edited the poems of Virgil and Horace, engaged in successful controversy with the great Bentley, gathered together a valuable library, corresponded with the best scholars of the day, and gained for himself the name of the finest player of chess in Europe. With his uncle, George kept up a warm friendship, visited him in Holland, and was entrusted by him at his death with the care of his unpublished papers.

Logan was born in 1678. At the age of fifteen, he entered the University of Glasgow and took his Master's degree in 1696. His choice of Glasgow as his Alma Mater indicates perhaps his connection by birth with Ayrshire. Stimulated by the example of his relative, Allan Logan, who had just been ordained to the parish of Torryburn, and was beginning to rise in the councils of the Church, George enrolled himself in Glasgow as a student of Divinity. In due course he was licensed by the Presbytery of Glasgow. A long period of

probation followed, during which we have no information regarding his movements. On the 7th April 1707, just after the Union of Scotland and England, he was ordained to the parish of Lauder. After a ministry of twelve years, during which he acted as chaplain to the Earl of Lauderdale, he was translated to Sprouston, in the Presbytery of Kelso, on the 22nd January 1719, and thence he removed in 1722 to the busy fishing port of Dunbar. His *terminus ad quem*, however, was Edinburgh, which he reached on the 14th December 1732, when he was settled in Trinity College Church. Though Logan was not a man of the highest ability, it would be difficult to point to a minister of the time who took, especially in general affairs, a more conspicuous place. His services within the Church through the Assembly were abundant, while for controversy through the press he had a consuming passion.

The bent of his sympathies was shown in 1717, when in company with Professor Hamilton, Professor Smith and some others, he took an active part in forming a society, which had for its object the publication of a correct edition of George Buchanan's works, by which "that incomparably learned and pious author [would be vindicated] from the calumnies of Mr Thomas Ruddiman." For some reason this proposal was never carried out, but several meetings were held in connection with it. Chalmers tells us in his *Life of Ruddiman*, that he had access to a small MS. volume in which the proceedings of this Society were entered. Its title-page ran in this way :—"Notes to vindicate the truth, and clear off the Aspertions by or in Mr Thomas Ruddiman's preface to Mr Robert Freebairn's edition of George Buchanan's History, their malignant spirit; or Mr James Anderson, antiquary, and others, their Vindication of Buchanan." Thus early, before he came to Edinburgh, did Logan whet his sword to slay the stalwart grammarian, who continued to oppose him till both combatants laid down their weapons through the weariness of old age. Chambers tells us in his *Domestic Annals* that in February 1724, a society for cultivating historical literature was established in Edinburgh (iii. 487). George Logan was a member of it, and James Anderson was its president. This may have been a re-formation of the Buchanan Society, but it serves to show how the love of Scottish history was dominant in Logan's mind.

Just before his translation to Edinburgh, Logan issued anonymously, in 1732, a pamphlet entitled *A Modest and Humble Inquiry concerning the right and power of electing and calling ministers to vacant Churches.* The preceding Assembly had passed an Act in connection with the election of ministers, to which reference has already been made in the biography of Principal Campbell. By that act, the elders and heritors of a vacant parish were empowered " to elect and call one to be the minister." Practically this set aside the right of the people to express their own opinion regarding their spiritual teacher. Logan's pamphlet dealt with the whole question. After examining it in the light of Scripture, he came to the conclusion " that there is nothing in the New Testament that doth either expressly, or by necessary consequence, establish to the people a right of election, or show that they at any time did exercise it at the direction of the Apostles." He surveyed likewise the wide field of Church History in general and Scottish Church History in particular, maintaining in relation to our national ecclesiastical procedure, that there never had been any fixed principle on the matter. He emphasized the difference between the *First Book of Discipline* and the *Second* in their canons regarding the election of ministers, and declared that it is " reasonable to suppose that such an assembly [as the Presbytery] has more learning, wisdom and prudence, than a congregation of illiterate persons, and are more able to judge of the abilities and qualifications of persons for the ministry " (p. 7).

Not satisfied with this lengthy treatise on the subject, Logan issued in the following year *A Continuation of the Modest and Humble Inquiry*, in which he replied to criticisms which had been passed on his first production. One of its divisions is entitled—" That the Church of Scotland, in framing the articles of her Constitution and Policy, did not found popular Elections on the Word of God." Another section attempts to show that " The Consent of the People or Parish, when refused, is not according to the Rules and Practice of this Church, a Negative on the Presbytery's Procedure to Ordination." These statements sufficiently reveal the line of argument pursued by the author.

About the same time a *Memorial*, numerously signed by the advocates of popular election, was drawn up in opposition to the Act and Overture of 1731, anent the calling of ministers.

Again Logan took up the gauntlet, and sought to confute the reasons advanced in the *Memorial* in favour of the rights of the people. This he did in *The Publick Testimony of above* 1600 *Christian People against the Overture of the Assembly* 1731, *Made more Publick and set in its due Light, being a Full Confutation of their Arguments.* Towards the close of this document, he allowed his pen to run beyond proper control by telling the 1600 Christian people that if they gained their point they would be unlike " the disciples of the meek and lowly Jesus," since they were " so daring to treat ministers, nay, a General Assembly of them, in such a clamorous and railing manner, that the gentlemen in Billingsgate and Drury Lane could scarcely exceed " them.

In connection with the same matter he addressed a letter, in 1733, to the Rev. George Gillespie of Strathmiglo, who had taken a leading part on the popular side. In it he called Gillespie's attention to the fact, that from Church documents bearing on Strathmiglo put recently into his hands, he found that in 1654 Donald Cargill, of Covenanting fame, had been elected to Strathmiglo by a majority of votes—the Session alone voting to the exclusion of the people, and at the same time voting in private meeting. Cargill, as we know, declined this call, and went to Glasgow instead. The same procedure, Logan asserted, took place in the following year in Strathmiglo, when a new minister was elected by the Session with the consent of the heritors of the parish. In a postscript the writer somewhat triumphantly called upon ministers " to search the ancient registers of their respective sessions to find out if popular calls were anciently in use in this Church."

A few years later Logan strenuously advocated a change in the method of choosing representatives to the Supreme Court of the Church, in *An Overture for the right constitution of the General Assembly and an Illustration of it, with an Appendix containing an useful and entertaining History of the Constitution of that Supreme Ecclesiastical Court from the first Assembly, anno* 1560, *down to our times. Edin.* 1736." The pamphlet in which he supported this overture extends to 102 pages 8vo, and is of considerable interest from the light it throws upon the method of electing representatives to the Assembly at the time. With great force Logan pressed for the representation of Presbyters by rotation. He did not succeed in carrying out his idea. Probably

ecclesiastical events in Scotland might have had a different issue if rotation had been accepted as the basis of representation. One passage from the pamphlet may be quoted:— "The returning of ministers," he says, "as Commissioners to the Assembly by a rotation, is no new thing in this Church. Indeed for some years after the late happy Revolution, those ministers who had been ordained before the Restoration, and survived the Revolution, were frequently elected Commissioners to the Assembly, because of their great prudence and long experience fitting them for acting such a wise part in ecclesiastic affairs, as might very much recommend the valuable interests of this Church, to the countenance and favour, the protection and encouragement of the civil government. The choosing of these sage and venerable fathers so often, who had merited so well of the Church by their faithfulness and constancy, their labours and sufferings under a long and cruel persecution, showed the high regard they had for them. For this same reason, those who were ordained before the year 1662, were by Act of Assembly *anno* 1705, declared to be constituent members of the Commission during life; for every Presbytery were to have their representation according to the proportion of ministers, and these old ministers were supernumerary. Besides, those that were received into the ministry quickly after the Revolution, not having much experience in ecclesiastical affairs, were but raw disciplinarians, but being trained up by such able teachers in the knowledge of government and discipline, so soon as these worthy pastors dropped off, though a yearly election was made of members to the Assembly, yet in effect it was no other than a *Rotation*. That is to say, Presbyteries returned such as were ministers to the Assembly as their Commissioners, in their due course and turns. This prevailed in most Presbyteries through the nation. This is a fact I am so sure of, that I am confident none will refuse it. Thus it appears that this method is no innovation or unprecedented thing. Why then may it not be established by a canon of the Church ?" (p. 29).

Logan proposed at the same time a scheme by which elders, who through being returned year after year, imagined they had a prescriptive right to election, should step aside and others, according to a certain rotation of parishes, take their place. He specially craved that elders should be chosen as Commissioners not only from the landed gentry,

but from the rank and file of the office-bearers. "Among all these," he says, after giving a list of elders in the Assembly of 1690, "there is not one farmer or mechanic" (p. 62). This proposal possibly lays Logan open to the charge of inconsistency. For if one mechanic, being an elder, was worthy of voting on questions of high moment in the Assembly, why should not another mechanic in the ordinary membership of the Church and equally qualified, be deemed worthy of voting for the minister who was to preach to him week after week ?

While he was busy with these subjects, a matter of a different kind, about which men's minds were divided, occupied public attention. In 1737 the Government passed an edict requiring all ministers to read at the regular service on Sabbath once a month for a year, a proclamation for the purpose of bringing to judgment the perpetrators of the murder of Captain Porteous. Deprivation of office was to be the penalty of disobedience. Logan and certain other of the Edinburgh ministers did not see any objection to the civil statute, and accordingly complied with it. An opposite view was taken by many ministers, who absolutely declined to read the Act. Dr Alexander Webster of the Tolbooth Church was one of the recusants. The diversity of opinion which obtained on the matter, became the occasion of a bitter controversy between Logan and certain of his brethren which only passed away when the time expired during which the edict ran. Wisely the Government refrained from inflicting the threatened penalty.

In support of his views on the Porteous Act, Logan, as his custom was, rushed immediately into print, sending out a pamphlet entitled—*Lawfulness and Necessity of Ministers, their reading the Act of Parliament for bringing to Justice, the Murderers of Captain John Porteous.* As he tells us himself with a good deal of pride, 600 copies of this pamphlet were speedily taken up and a new impression was called for. However, though he strenuously upheld in it the propriety and duty of complying with the Government enactment, he himself did not read the whole of it from the pulpit. For one thing, he left out the reference to the Lords Spiritual as savouring too much of Prelacy for a Presbyterian congregation, and he also withheld the threat of penalties to be inflicted in case of disobedience, as savouring too much of Erastianism. His lengthy argument, for though it was

published anonymously its authorship was quite well-known, received a reply from George Wishart, minister of the Tron Church, who though inclined to Moderatism was an unbending opponent of the Act. Tracts on both sides began to flow from the press with wonderful rapidity. In October of the same year Logan issued an answer to his critics, one of whom had characterized his performance as " a pill in prose which will not go down." With a smile of satisfaction the author replied—" It does go down, 600 people have taken it, and it has operated too, as witness the satire, falsehoods and untruths, which they have vomited up." He adds the fact that two-thirds of the ministers in Scotland had read the Act at public worship.

Dr Webster of the Tolbooth came out in answer with *Remarks* on all the pamphlets *pro* and *con* that had appeared. Here is what he says about the opponents of Logan, and the success with which they met in their fight with him. " These writers have indeed got the victory, but no glorious one ; considering their antagonist, it looks somewhat like a coward to attack a man who had laid himself at their mercy. And sure

" There was no need
To write against what none will read.
Some things are only born to dy,
Their own last speech's elegy.
And from the press they go of course
To wrap up snuff or do what's worse."

This is certainly uncomplimentary, but even still harder blows were to fall on Logan's head. " *The Lawfulness and Necessity*," he says, " *N.B.* not Necessity and Lawfulness, *of Ministers, their reading the Act of Parliament*—a heavy performance, full of blunders in law, precedents misapplied, and remarks foreign to the purpose.

" Methought when I this author read,
No vessel but an Ass's head
Such frigid Fustian could contain,
I mean the head without the brain ;
The old conceits, the chilling thoughts
Went down like stupifying draughts.
I found my head begin to swim,
A numbness crept through every limb ;
In haste with imprecations dire,
I threw the volume in the fire,
When, who would think, though cold as ice,
It burnt to ashes in a trice.
How could I more inhance its fame !
Though born in snow, it dy'd in flame."

Of Logan's *Answer* to his critics Webster says :—" This performance, in imitation of the *Tinclarian* doctor, presents to the world a gentleman beating his brains to bring out what Nature never designed they should contain. Blown up to the true spirit and temper of a combatant ; pushing on his own assertions without the least regard to the answers of his adversaries ; using personal reflections instead of arguments ; wrestling to extricate himself from a labyrinth of inexplicable difficulties ; loading others with his own blunders and mistakes ; hunting through endless volumes for precedents to a case which never had a parallel ; erring in every line and yet fully persuaded of his own infallibility ; omitting nothing that a common-place memory can furnish out, whether to the purpose or not ; believing that good sense lies in multiplying pages, and that the sure way to remain unanswered is to write what few will read and none understand.

> " Pains, reading, study is his just pretence,
> And all he wants is spirit, taste and sense ;
> Commas and points he sets exactly right,
> And it were sin to rob him of his mite."

It is not needful to comment further on the controversy. It may only be observed that it is a good thing that discussion is carried on to-day in a kindlier strain. By a strange error, Chambers in his *Dictionary of Eminent Scotsmen* states that Logan in this long discussion on Church Government upheld the right of the people to elect their minister, and was strengthened in this view by the fact that he had been called both to Lauder and Sprouston by the vote of the congregation. How the writer of the article could make such a mistake, it is difficult to explain except on the ground that he had not read Logan's pamphlets. Through misplaced confidence in Chambers' statement, I perpetuated the error in the brief account of Logan to be found in the *History of Old Cumnock*.

The great controversy, however, of the life of the minister of Trinity College, was waged round the abstract question of the divine hereditary right of kings to wear the crown, and the practical question whether in Scotland the Stewart kings possessed an unchallengeable title to the throne. The quarrel between the Jacobites and the supporters of the House of Hanover, made the abstract question of the divine right of monarchs throb with interest, while the

concrete question of the actual legitimacy of the line of royal personages in Scotland was one which could be debated and decided on the plain ground of historical facts, if such facts could be tabled. The second question resolved itself into a discussion of the legitimacy of Robert III. On both of these questions Logan took up a negative position. His great opponent was Thomas Ruddiman, the grammarian, who claimed *jus divinum* for kings and unstained legitimacy for Robert III.

Into the prolonged controversy between these two champions it is not possible to enter minutely here. One or two remarks must suffice. With regard to the divine right of kings, Logan evidently agreed with the bare principle laid down by Grotius that in hereditary right there was nothing more than " a continuation to the descendants of the permission given to their ancestors " to occupy the throne. Accordingly, as this permission was granted by the people, it could be recalled by the people. The claim that Robert III. was illegitimate, inasmuch as the union between his father and Elizabeth Mure of Rowallan was marred by too great nearness of blood on the part of the contracting parties, and by the lack of the sanction of the Church, is maintained by Logan with wonderful power and knowledge. He held that Robert II.'s true wife was Euphemia Ross, the daughter of the Earl of Ross, and that her children were in the real line of succession to the throne. Her eldest son ought to have been crowned on the death of his father. Instead of that, he was set aside, and an Act of Parliament passed declaring the eldest son of Elizabeth Mure to be the heir to the Crown. Out of this contest it would seem that Logan came victorious. Even at the present time, opinion is divided as to the sufficiency of the title of Robert III. to the supreme royal dignity, but a survey of his exhaustive arguments leads to the conclusion that the honours rest with Logan.

The question is interesting. Hill Burton is quite decided on the point. " In early life," he says, " [Robert II.] had married Elizabeth, a daughter of Sir Adam Mure of Rowallan," but according to ecclesiastical or canon law their children were regarded as born out of wedlock. He adds that the succession of their first-born son to the throne in which he was placed " by parliamentary title," shows that the Church was not strong enough to upset the arrangement made by

the State" (*Hist.* ii. 345). John Riddell, perhaps the greatest genealogist Scotland has possessed, gives us the conclusion to which he came on the matter in his *Stewartiana.* "Robert III.," he says, "was born in incestuous concubinage —that status then legally applying before the Reformation, however odd it may seem at present, to the offspring of individuals so situated as his father and mother, and such being the fact, Robert III. in ordinary course could not be *legitimated* from the legal bar of incest by subsequent marriage upon a dispensation, however now regular between his parents" (*quoted by Hill Burton, ibid.*) The *Dictionary of National Biography* sets forth the same view in unmistakable terms. Robert III. "was born probably about 1340, prior to the marriage of Robert II. with his first wife, and was legitimated by their subsequent marriage for which a dispensation was procured from the Pope in 1347." To these opinions no other need be added.

The various treatises, five in number, which came from the pen of Logan when dealing with this matter, may be given in order.

1. A Treatise on Government, showing that the right of the Kings of Scotland to the Crown was not strictly and absolutely hereditary, 1746.
2. A second Treatise on Government showing that the Right to the Crown of Scotland was not hereditary in the sense of the Jacobites, 1747.
3. The Finishing Stroke, or Mr Ruddiman self-condemned, 1748.
4. The Finishing Stroke or Mr Ruddiman more self-condemned, 1748.
5. The Doctrine of the Jure-Divino-ship of Hereditary Indefeasible Monarchy enquired into and exploded in a letter to Mr Thomas Ruddiman, 1749.

In addition to this large literary output, which abundantly proves his zeal and industry, Logan addressed Ruddiman on another matter which was causing some stir at the time. Both Bishop Sage at an earlier date, and Ruddiman more recently, had revived an old story regarding Alexander Henderson to the effect that shortly before his death Henderson had not only expressed regret for the attitude he had taken up towards Charles I., but also renounced the Presbyterian faith and returned to Episcopacy. The story was absolutely without foundation, and was hardly worth refuting. Logan, however, would not let the charge

pass unanswered, and accordingly came out with *A second Letter to Mr Thomas Ruddiman, vindicating the celebrated Mr Alexander Henderson from the vile Aspertions cast upon him by Messieurs Sage and Ruddiman, as guilty of great injuries done by him to King Charles I., and as repenting of his conduct and management in publick affairs from the year* 1638 *till his death, August* 12, 1647. This letter was published in 1749, and is a complete vindication of the leader of the second Reformation.

From the long-continued contest between Logan and Ruddiman, the grammarian was the first to withdraw. He had reached the age of seventy-five when he wrote :—" I will betake myself to business more suitable to one of my years and inclinations." The public evidently took a great interest in the fight between these sturdy antagonists. Each stood for a party. Many hard things were said about Logan, and many bitter things written about him. In 1747, an anonymous letter addressed to him was published in the press. It closed in this way :—" Upon the whole, Reverend Sir, my best advice is—Mind your spiritual affairs, it will become you better. Teach your flock the doctrine of charity, mercy and brotherly love. Or if, according to your laudable practice, you will meddle with the times, stick to your text in the pulpit ; there you may say what you please, there nobody dares contradict you." That may be taken as a sample of the treatment measured out to Logan in some quarters. His opponents at the time and afterwards tried in many different ways to depreciate him. They accused him of possessing logical powers of a very inconsiderable kind. Sir David Dalrymple said of him :— " If Mr Logan was ever possest of abilities, he had lost them before he engaged in the dispute with Ruddiman. I have read a manuscript work," continues Sir David, " which Mr Logan showed me concerning Gowrie's conspiracy ; it gave me a very mean opinion, indeed, of his critical talents " (Chalmers' *Ruddiman*, p. 224). His opponent's biographer says of him :—" Logan had from nature no vigour of intellect, from study no enlargement of knowledge, from habit no precision of reasoning, and when he came out with his *Treatise on Government*, which abler pens had failed to explain, his friends lamented that he should have exposed, even to the eye of friendship, an intemperance of spirit, which only enfeebled the efforts of his zeal " (*ibid* 193). This can only be regarded as venomous

on the part of Chalmers. Logan's many writings prove him to have been possessed of intellectual powers which, if not of the first quality, were certainly above the average, while the charge of intemperance in speech can be refuted out of Ruddiman's own mouth. In *The Finishing Stroke*, Logan says :—" Mr R—n does me the justice to own that I have treated him in a decent and civil manner " (p. 5). It may be that his opponents felt he was wielding a sword whose thrusts they could not avoid, and so they discharged at him the arrows of vituperation.

Other matters were also taken up by Logan in his dispute with the great grammarian, but it is needless to dwell upon them. It will suffice to say that among them were the questions whether Baliol was nearer by blood to the Scottish throne than Bruce, and whether the Pretender was really the son of James II. Logan maintained in regard to the first question that Baliol's claim to the crown was stronger than Bruce's, while in regard to the second, he stoutly declared the illegitimacy of the Pretender. Logan was right on the first point, but wrong on the second.

Long before this controversy came to an end, the highest honour in the Church had been bestowed upon Logan. In 1740 he was raised to the Chair of the Assembly, the only name proposed in rivalry to his being that of Andrew Cuming of Largs, who had taken up a sympathetic attitude towards the Seceding brethren. By a great majority Logan was chosen Moderator. The meagre support given to Cuming was an index of the final treatment which Erskine and his friends were to receive at the hands of the Assembly.

On the 10th May the Seceders, now eight in number, were publicly called three times at the doors of the Assembly Hall and the New Church. The citation was repeated on the 12th, but none of them appeared. On the 15th, the question was put—Depose or Not? By 140 votes to 30 the motion for deposition was carried. A number abstained from voting. The proceedings have already been narrated in the sketch of James Bannatine, who moved the resolution which became the finding of the Assembly. This alone would have made the Assembly of Mr Logan memorable. The parishes of the eight brethren were declared vacant, and the Moderator was appointed to write letters to the magistrates of the respective burghs concerned, communicating to them copies of the sentence imposed. It was a sad day when the Erskines and their associates were driven

out of the historic Church of Scotland, but no one will hesitate to say that the evil has been over-ruled for good, and turned even into a blessing for the Scottish people. One of the most inspiring chapters of our national story would be blotted out, if the testimony and achievements of the Secession leaders did not find a place in it. The thing was of God, and it could not come to nought. If the casting away of the Seceders from the old Church proved such a means of grace to the land, what shall the receiving of them again be?

After such an eventful act, the Assembly proceeded to discharge the ordinary business which fell to be overtaken. One item of interest may be noted. We are told that the Assembly "sanctioned the purchase of a copy of Mr Baillie's *Letters* in four volumes at the rate of £10 sterling."

Thereafter the Moderator gave his closing address. In it he alluded to the "hard law and grievance of patronage," and then passing to the matter of the deposition of Erskine and his friends, remarked that they had "for several years made a most unwarrantable Secession from the Church, happily established by law; and yet with the greatest inconsistency that ever was heard of, have all the time of their public Secession, retained the civil profits of this Establishment—I mean their stipends, their manses and glebes. Pretending to a degree of sanctity above all their brethren, as if they were the most excellent ones in all the earth, as if all should bow down to their judgment—no doubt they are the people, and wisdom shall die with them. I shall not point out their divisive and schismatical practices, nay, immoralities, highly criminal in ministers, nor set forth the aggravations of them in their due light and proper colour, lest I should be thought to deliver a satire upon them." Words like these, spoken with all the responsibility and authority belonging to the Chair of the Assembly, let us see once more to what a pitch feeling had arisen over the questions in debate. Just before he closed his address, Logan is said to have given utterance to a very amusing ambiguous expression. He was exhorting fathers and brethren to do all they could to check the growth of error in the land, especially he said "the growth of Popery, to which we are too much encouraged by his Majesty's Royal Bounty and donation." We are told that these were Logan's *ipsissima verba*. If so, we can easily imagine how his detractors would enjoy the *lapsus linguæ*, and the King

smile at the innocent insinuation when it was repeated to him by the High Commissioner.

A very prominent part was taken by Logan during the Rebellion of 1745, in support of the House of Hanover. The records of the time testify to his courage and zeal. Edinburgh was divided in its allegiance. Prince Charlie had many sympathizers, and when the Jacobites entered the city, Logan and others were subjected to a good deal of annoyance. A few notes will make this apparent. From the *Scots Magazine* we learn the following bit of news. "In the evening of the 21st [September] which was the Saturday after the Highland army came to Edinburgh, and the day on which the battle was fought, a message was sent by the Chevalier to the respective dwelling-houses of the ministers of that city, desiring them to continue public worship as usual. The bells accordingly rung next day, but none of the ministers appeared, so that there was sermon in none of the Churches." This state of matters lasted till the 10th November, when public worship was established again in all the Churches. Some ministers found it possible to conduct service on the preceding Sabbath. The *Wood-douselee MS.* gives a more particular reference to Logan. It informs us that "when the Castle demolished the west end of the Weigh House, the Highland gaird there took up in Mr Logan, the minister's house in Miln's Square. The servant opened the doors of such rooms as she had keys, but they broke into closets and demolished the doors, and have now left the house. Mr Logan and his lady and family are fled to Mrs Irvine, their friend's house at Newton in Clydesdale, in Crawfordjohn paroch" (p. 68). After he got back to Edinburgh and had surveyed the desolation made in his home, Logan displayed a good deal of humour in an advertisement he inserted in the *Caledonian Mercury*, in which he requested the restoration of his stolen property. He managed in the notice to make one or two good hits at the Tory party.

Before the Young Pretender took possession of the capital, it was evident to all who were in Edinburgh that the Jacobite attack would be successful. The city was divided at the moment against itself, and could not stand. The conflicting views held by the two sections of the inhabitants are very clearly brought out in the evidence led at the trial of Archibald Stewart, who was Lord Provost at the time. Stewart was charged by the Crown with failure to do all he could have

done to keep the city for the king. The following extracts from the report of the trial, bearing upon Logan's efforts, may be given. " This spirit for putting the town in a posture of defence was so generally prevalent among the well-affected . . . . that of this date [September 5th] a Representation to the Lord Provost, Magistrates and Council was signed by the Principal and Professor of Divinity and twelve of the ministers of the city of Edinburgh, of whom the total number is sixteen, so that three only were absent or wanting ; which Representation sets forth that they have seen and considered a petition to their Lordship and Honours praying that the city might be put in a proper posture of defence against the common enemy ; that they, the ministers of Edinburgh, judged it their duty to testify their hearty approbation of such design, and their firm resolution to promote the same in their sphere and station, and thereby engage cheerfully to contribute for defraying the necessary expense with their fellow-citizens" (p. 37). The ministers were as good as their word, for out of their moderate stipends they subscribed for the support of one hundred men out of the thousand proposed to be raised.

At the trial of the Lord Provost, Logan was summoned along with other ministers, to give evidence. Here is his deposition. " That in the afternoon of Monday, 16th September, the deponent and some of his brethren ministers, being told in a coffee-house that there was a meeting of a great many of the inhabitants in the New Church Isle, and that it was the opinion of the meeting that the town could not be defended against the rebels, the deponent therefore went to the said meeting ; that he found there the pannel acting as Praeses of the meeting ; that the meeting was very numerous ; that he could not say that they were composed of such as he thought the best affected to his Majesty's Government ; that many of them he did not know, but of those he knew severals were such as he always thought disaffected ; that the deponent does not remember to have seen any of the volunteers there except Mr Glen the minister, but where they were he knows not ; that as the deponent, or at least his wife, had a considerable interest in the town, which he was very willing to risk for the service of the Government, he proposed to the pannel then Praeses of meeting, that the dragoons be brought into town for the defence of it. The dragoons were gone too far to be brought back again" (p. 32). This meeting seems to have been

a very noisy one. "The Reverend Mr Logan," we read, "and others who attempted to speak in opposition [to surrender] were borne down with clamour and noise." Further reference to the matter, however, need not be made. Stewart was acquitted of the charge of neglect of duty. Logan, though forced to leave the city for a time, showed himself a man of nerve and loyalty.

During his ministerial career, Logan was frequently a member of Assembly and usually took a leading part in its discussions. The *Wodrow Correspondence* bears testimony to the interest he took in all questions that came up for settlement before the Supreme Court. He was particularly active in the Simson case. His attitude towards the Glasgow Professor was very sympathetic. He pled for the full restoration of the erring teacher. One quotation from the Eastwood historian will suffice to make clear his position. On the 6th May 1729, Wodrow wrote to his wife:—"On Sabbath there were two sermons preached before the Commissioner, by Mr George Logan in the forenoon and a minister in Fife in the afternoon, both of whom it seems spoke favourably of Mr Simson" (iii. 415). In the course of the prolonged discussion which followed on the case, Logan "alleged Christ's restoring Peter, after a worse fall than Mr Simson's was, to his apostolical office, and repeated, they say, much of what he had in his lecture last Sabbath, which is to be printed. Then he signified how much he was satisfied with Mr Simson's declarations, and told us that he was the person that led him to begin them last year. Then as to the numerical oneness, he alleged the whole current of Protestant writers expressed themselves much as Mr Simson did, and were not even for using the term numerical, but *unicus* and singular, and cited Gomarus, Cloppenburg, Hornbeck, and Cheynell in England. Then he urged the common topic at present, that there was not one Council had ever deposed an erroneous person after he had renounced his errors, and cited two or three instances. But, unluckily, they all afterwards when received, fell back to their errors and worse. He left other citations to Mr Gowdie, who, he said, was better prepared, and dared, yea, charged any member of the Assembly to show one instance of coming on to censure upon a declaration of orthodoxy as Mr Simson's" (iii. 425).

Such statements leave no doubt that Logan regarded Simson as fit to return to his professorial work. As Wodrow

hinted, the sermon which he preached before the Assembly was published. Its text was John xxi. 15-19. At the close of the sermon the following passages occur :—" Tenderness ought to be used towards penitents and such as are reclaimed from the error and evil of their ways." " An erroneous person or an immoral liver is a member of the Church out of joint (Gal. vi. 1). Set such an one aright again ; reduce him to a sound mind and the practice of duty. This must be done in the spirit of meekness What ! Is there only one way to reclaim an offender ? Shall the rough and severe way be followed ? The censures of the Church should be the last remedy." The reference is clearly to the case that was coming up for consideration. Some people naturally took exception to it. Of this Logan was aware, and accordingly he prefixed this note to the printed sermon. " The author is not in the least afraid that he shall be attacked for anything delivered in this discourse ; but being sensible it was impossible to please all parties in a discourse at such an extraordinary occasion, he has been prevailed upon to publish this discourse, to confute the misrepresentations made of it by some to serve a turn."

The humourists of the day, with more or less truth, poked fun at Logan. The ballad from which quotations bearing on other Moderators have already been made, strikes this note about his sympathy with Simson.

> " George Logan held forth with an insolent air,
> In the pulpit, the House and the Press ;
> In pleading for Simson no pains he did spare,
> He's so like him, he could do no less.
> He thought to run down by a forehead of brass,
> Each man who did Simson oppose,
> While he did but the part of a Fop or an Ass,
> And his impotent folly disclose."

In 1751, when he was near the end of his career, Logan showed he had not swerved by a hand-breadth from the position he occupied as minister of Dunbar in regard to the right of congregations to elect their own spiritual teachers. The notorious Torphichen case came up for judgment. To the patron's nominee the parishioners almost unanimously objected on the ground that " he could not be heard in the church, and that they could never submit to his ministry in regard he had accepted of a presentation without the consent and concurrence of almost the whole parish " (Morren, i. 181). The Assembly of 1751 rebuked the Presbytery of Linlithgow for failing to carry out their

instructions and proceed with the settlement of the objectionable nominee. They further peremptorily ordered the Presbytery immediately to ordain him, but in case the Presbytery again refused, a Riding Committee was appointed to effect the settlement. This, the Riding Committee accomplished on the 31st May with the aid of a military force. It is interesting to remember that this was the last instance of a settlement carried through by means of such a Committee. It has a special interest for us, because on the list of its members appears the name of George Logan, Edinburgh.

Little more needs to be said about the minister of Trinity College. One other sermon was published by him, which was delivered at the opening of the Synod of Lothian and Tweeddale on the 23rd April 1728. The text was 1 Tim. v. 21. Logan was twice married; first while at Lauder to Annie Hume, daughter of John Hume of Eccles, on the 5th April 1711, and secondly to Lilias Weir, daughter of Thomas Weir, Surgeon, on the 1st January 1744. On both occasions the marriage took place in Edinburgh. By his first wife he had a son and a daughter. His son, who was named George, became minister of Ormiston in 1751, and was distinguished for his philosophical gifts. He was asked by friends, who deemed him competent for the task, to write a reply to Hume's *Treatise on Miracles*. He died, however, in the third year of his ministry, before he could overtake the work. Chalmers gives us an interesting glimpse of Logan's personal appearance. He tells us that the Rev. David Love saw "Ruddiman in August 1747, at the examination of his father's school, sitting between George Logan, who was a little neat man, and Professor Mackie, who was tall and thin" (*Life of Ruddiman*, p. 274). Even though the contest between the two men was at its height in 1747, it is pleasing to know that at such a gathering they could sit together in amity.

Logan continued his work to the end of his life. He died on the 13th October 1755, in the seventy-seventh year of his age and the forty-ninth of his ministry.

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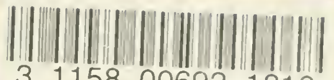

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